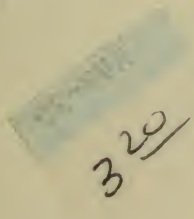
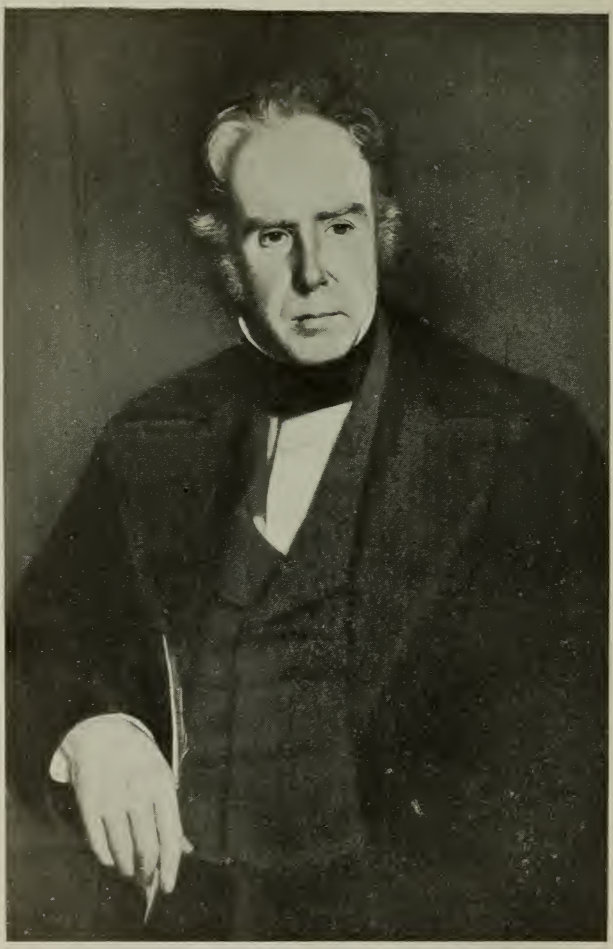
To Father Connolly for
the class in Irish literature.





WILLIAM CARLETON

CARLETON'S
STORIES OF IRISH LIFE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY DARRELL FIGGIS

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CONTENTS

	Page
Neal Malone	1
Phelim O'Toole's Courtship	30
The Geography of an Irish Oath	156
Bob Pentland, or The Gauger Outwitted	187
The Party Fight and Funeral	200
The Midnight Mass	300
The Hedge School	309
Denis O'Shaughnessy Going to Maynooth	339

WILLIAM CARLETON.

If to see Life whole be rightly accounted the chief of literary virtues, then William Carleton—or Uilliam O Cearbhallain, in his own country's tongue—cannot be said to have attained that virtue Yet, in his own way, he desired it. Strictly speaking, he pursued it. He followed his art round from point to point of view, sometimes as narrator, sometimes as exhibitor, very often as round-and-sound moral preacher ; and in the end he succeeded in surveying most of the aspects presented by the life of the Ireland of his time ; but with a curious result. The ground that he surveyed to-day he would occupy to-morrow, glancing backward or forward, as the case might be, not content to stand still while Life took its procession before him, but ever passing around, and regarding each succeeding point of view from the standpoint of some other. The result is kaleidoscopic : bewildering rather, till one understands the secret of his journeying. He always declared, with, perhaps, a slight excess of protestation, that the truth of all he had written was unimpugnable. Justifying once what seemed to be a new departure, but which, in truth, was no more than part of his journey, he said :

" I have written many works on Irish life, and up to the present day the man has never lived who could lay his finger on any passage of my writings, and say, ' *That is false*.' " Truth is something more than a verbal or factual accuracy, and it is never his accuracy that is in question. In reading through the mass of his " many works on Irish life," the bewilderment lies, not in any falsity (his knowledge was too intimate for that), but in the changing standpoints from which he told his truth, in his progress round the many possible standpoints, and the curious aspect the standpoint of to-day suddenly came to wear when viewed from the standpoint of to-morrow.

So assiduous was his pursuit that he succeeded finally in seeing the whole of life in Ireland—though not always, to be sure, with the same success—but he saw it piecemeal ; and he leaves his reader baffled at last to know what standpoint to take in order that all the pieces may fall into an orderly whole. The parts are all true ; but cohesion is strangely lacking. The Tithe War, for instance, in the succession of " wars " to which despotism has enforced us, had a simple and urgent justice that even the Land War did not possess ; yet who, after reading *Tubber Dearg*, and loving the noble figures that occupy its pages, and perceiving the knowledge and intimacy that went to the making of those figures, can turn to *The Tithe Proctor* without bewilderment. Indeed, bewilderment is the least of the effects

that that unhappy book creates; for bewilderment is soon succeeded by exasperation. Despite the presence of the Cannie Soogah, who would believe that that swelter of humanity contained many a man like Owen McCarthy, men little disposed to be carried away by so palpable a humbug as Buck English? Who, after reading the first half of *The Poor Scholar*, packed as it is with historical suggestion, can read *Rody the Rover* without impatience? We may not, in answer to his challenge, be able to lay our finger on such books and say, "*That is false*," because, after all, so much in this world depends on the point of view. But we can express a decided preference for a point of view. We can complain of his not altogether unconscious desire to see Life whole, because of the very queer changes it caused him to make; or of the queer dartings to and fro from point to point of view that sometimes upset the balance both of his work and his judgment, not to mention our patience. No man has more nobly and adequately exhibited certain essential parts of the Irish character; and yet it is true that few men have been more responsible—if only because of the vogue he enjoyed at an important moment in Irish history—for certain silly misconceptions that an enemy has been only too ready to form.

In estimating, then, the value of Carleton's work, it is important to examine the causes of this; for few men have more suffered in the judgment of time because

of the vagaries to which his pen was addicted. It is customary to allude to the Statutes of Kilkenny as ancient history. That first formulated attempt to eliminate Gaelic civilization is thought of as resting safely in the fifteenth century, so little historical imagination have we; yet most of our misfortunes, literary as well as political, are due to that elimination, the intention of which was then indicated. Line after line of attack down through the centuries, culminating in the Penal Code, submerged the intellectual life of which the nation was once so justly proud; yet not only submerged the nation's own characteristic intellectual life, but introduced into the country the characteristic intellectual life and conceptions of another nation; and, last indignity of all, caused that other life to be the peculiar perquisite of a social caste. Fancy may play about the possibility of his having been born in a State where Irish civilization had had its unhindered, though not necessarily unadventurous, development; or even if he had lived as the blind poet, Turlough O'Carolan, did, when the development was only partially arrested. He would then have written of his own people to his own people, without having to consult an ascendancy who viewed his own race askance, and who wished to find palliatives for their prejudice. In other words, a wholesome unity would have existed inside his created work, because of, and even as a reflex of, the more wholesome unity in the social estate; and it is just that

wholesome unity that is chiefly lack from the lack of the same cause.

Partial thinking conceives of Art as international. Art only becomes international in terms of an intense national life. It can only reach the upper air by its roots being set deep in its own native earth. We do not think of Turgenev as an international figure because he made part of an international circle in Paris, but because he expressed a certain intensity that was Russian. Indeed, it is mainly because that Parisian life weakened his national expression that he is giving place to Dostöevski, who is more completely and intensely Russian; for intensity, suspended or clamant, is the great quality of the imagining intellect, and can only be attained in a clear and unconfused air. What, however, was the atmosphere bequeathed to Carleton, and in what Ireland did he write?

No heir of a continuing development was he; nor was it permitted to him to express a nation's whole and complete and historic idiom, first to itself, and then to other nations. For one thing, the nation which he at his finest expressed so finely was denied the very education by which it could read him; and he had to address himself over the water, or to an Ascendancy, or to those who depended in some sort from that Ascendancy. With what pitiful tenacity the nation clung to, and prized, the education that was its historic and traditional glory his own pages declare. It is not only

displayed in such stories as *The Hedge Schoolmaster* and *The Poor Scholar;* it is embodied in most of his tales. In that struggle for the retention of intellectual life, that struggle against the other nation that had intruded to stamp out that intellectual life, he himself had his part; for Mat Kavanagh was a portrait of the schoolmaster to whom he turned, even as he himself sat for the portrait of the Poor Scholar. Born of the Irish peasantry, or rather of a dying Irish yeomanry, in the year 1794, in the county Tyrone, he had to suffer in person, as the vigorous pages of the fragment of his autobiography so well reveal, the amazing penalties imposed on his race—penalties of land tenure and consequent insecurity of property, of mental culture, of national and personal freedom.

That he as a lad was a proficient—if, according to his own candid showing, a somewhat stiltedly proficient—Latin scholar, under those conditions, able to converse and compose in that language, is an astonishing thing Yet he was only one of many emulous of that social honour. "When I left school," he says—and it is of a hedge-school he speaks, created by the people's own effort—"I could have spoken or written Latin as fluently as English." It is, incidentally, a curious commentary on latter-day curricula, that have not sufficed to give either the emulation or the proficiency. And when he went on the ways of adventure he was burthened with the same penalties. He had first set

out, as his Poor Scholar did, for the Munster Schools, and had, like his Poor Scholar, received hospitality on his journey—because " goin' the way you are . . . . that same's an honour to you "—but home-sickness had caused him to flinch at the continuation of his journey. Then, after some years of empty honour at home, and, after his father's death, of complaint from his brothers of the expense his idle life meant to them—though he protests in his own defence that he " read the classics several hours a day "—he set out to make his fortune in the world, impelled, as he says, by a reading of " Gil Blas." His adventures need to be read in his own recital. He accepted the tuition, much against his will, of a churlish farmer's children ; his shirt on one occasion purchased him a night's lodging ; he became tutor in a school in the City of Dublin ; he surrendered thoughts of Trinity College for matrimony ; he became clerk in the Sunday School Society ; ejected thence, he became schoolmaster in his turn, and reluctantly left Dublin, where he had tried his hand at certain essays that had won him friends and some private estimation that was afterwards to prove of value to him.

Most of this time he was part of a frustrated and repressed, yet consistent and unified, national life. When he touched the City of Dublin, however, he touched another flow ; and, as was inevitable at that moment in the country's history, with the controversy of Catholic Emancipation in the air, his surrender of

a good deal of Catholic belief drew him into that flow. It caused him, inevitably perhaps (the course being what it was), to look back upon the life in the frustrations of which he himself had suffered from the point of view of the ascendancy of the other national life that had schemed and caused those frustrations. The life he had lived he began to see slowly, though never wholly, from the point of view of another life that wished only to repress and injure it. Little wonder that his after writings shifted kaleidoscopically from point of view to point of view. His tutorship in classics to the son of Mr. Fox, who was "master of a very large English school in the Coombe," started the process. His clerkship in the Sunday School Society deepened it. The two Protestant schools with which he was entrusted at Mullingar and Carlow could not at that time but fix it more firmly in him. So that when, on his next return to Dublin, he met the Rev. Cæsar Otway, his mind was well ripened for the purposes of "The Christian Examiner," even if the desperation of poverty, with a family to support, had not made him eager for work of any kind.

The Rev. Cæsar Otway was at once an ardent antiquarian and an ardent proselytizer. Nor were the two things dissociated in his mentality. At that time the Church of Ireland was, confessedly and proudly, a statement of the Ascendency. It was based on the Penal Code, and thus on the repression of national life.

Its proselytizing effort, therefore, readily became a de-nationalizing zeal; and so provided matter for antiquarian interest. It is only necessary to read the Rev. Cæsar Otway's books to perceive how quickly the two occupations of his life became interchangeable. When he met Carleton he was quick to see the possibilities of his new acquaintance. An emancipated Catholic from the peasantry, who was also a good Latinist, was beyond all question a sight to gladden the Rev. Cæsar Otway's eyes. In his "Sketches in Ireland" he had written an account of the annual pilgrimage to Loch Dearg; and hearing that Carleton had performed a Station there, he at once commissioned a written account of the pilgrim's experiences for "The Christian Examiner." This was to be followed by other sketches exhibiting the life and customs and "superstitions" of the Irish people.

Guided into authorship in the guise of a half-preacher, and put into the position where he could shake an admonitory finger at his own nation, Carleton never thereafter forgot to regard himself in that light. It is like a trail over all his work. Long afterwards, in a letter to Father Mathew, he spoke of himself as "being willing to hope that, through the aid of truthful fiction operating upon the feelings of his countrymen, and on their knowledge of present life, he may furnish them with such a pleasing encyclopædia of social duty—now lit up with their mirth, and again made tender with their

sorrow—as will force them to look upon him as a benefactor . . ." The encyclopædia in question is not always "pleasing." *Parra Sastha* and *The Tithe Proctor*, for example, display the preacher in that mood of public defamation that the wise distrust. Sometimes the encyclopædia succeeds in being "pleasing" quite unexpectedly from the point of view of the preacher. Phelim O'Toole, for instance, is a joy and a delight. Seldom did Carleton's pen make such speed with mischief; and to none among all the children of his brain does the memory return with more pleasure, for Phelim O'Toole takes rank in the company of Falstaff, in no degree unworthy of that company. It is very certain that Carleton never remembered himself as an encyclopædist of social duty in the gusto of that act of creation; but the memory came rushing into the cooler, the less happy, reflection that followed, with the result that he enunciated his text after his oration, for a vanishing and delighted audience. It is to be hoped that he only wished to mollify the Rev. Cæsar Otway, for this was the text he added as postcript to his tale :—

"We have attempted to draw Phelim O'Toole as closely as "possible to the character of that class whose ignorance, want "of education, and absence of all moral principle constitute "them the shame and reproach of the country. By such men "the peace of Ireland is destroyed, illegal combinations formed, "blood shed, and nightly outrages committed. There is nothing "more certain than this plain truth, that if proper religious and "moral knowledge were impressed upon the early principles of "persons like Phelim, a conscience would be created capable

"of revolting from crime. Whatever the grievances of a people "may be, whether real or imaginary, one thing is clear, that "neither murder nor illegal violence of any description can be "the proper mode of removing or redressing them. We have "kept Phelim's Ribbonism in the background, because its details "would excite only aversion, and preferred exhibiting his utter "ignorance of morality upon a less offensive subject, in order "that the reader might be enabled to infer, rather than to witness "with his mind's eye, the deeper crimes of which he was capable."

In very truth, the reader of this belated text is "enabled to infer" deeper crimes than those of which Phelim O'Toole was capable. Behind Carleton's shoulder he can see the lurking figure of Cæsar Otway; and behind Cæsar Otway again he can see a despotism that could only buy, though hardily buy, a fair seeming for oppression by the assumption of superior morals and a quite disinterested civilising zeal. Carleton never did himself, or the life he depicted, or the art of which he was the craftsman, deeper wrong than when he accepted the standpoint of that despotism; for there are few readers who will not espouse the cause of Phelim O'Toole against his creator.

Yet the life he depicted conquered his pen; and we may imagine that this was considerably to the discomfiture of "The Christian Examiner," for he remained with it only for four years, and one of his last contritions, *Denis O'Shaughnessy going to Maynooth*, was mutilated by the editor. During this period he wrote the first series of his *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*. More spirited and vigorous than the second

series that appeared three years later, even as the second series is richer and mellower and completer in memorable portraiture—the two together comprise some of the best of his work. Indeed, it is no matter of congratulation that they should have been permitted to pass out of print, for they rank second to none in Anglo-Irish literature, old or new, besides being an infinitely valuable historical document. Certain things in them deserved the attack they received at the time. We need not, for instance, question the essential truth of such a sketch as *The Station*, and yet we may agree with Carleton's later judgment that such writing served no "earthly good." That it and other like things were due to the influence of the company he joined is beyond question; but most of the stories, and certainly all but one of the second series, were influenced simply by the humanity and human beauty and variety of the life he knew so well; for already he had entered on the queer dartings that became more rapid as the years passed.

Despite assaults, these two series were well received on every hand, in England and Scotland as well as in Ireland, winning for Carleton fame, if not money. Critics having a perennial sameness, it was agreed that a man who could tell short stories so well (though, indeed, some of his stories are of the length of many a modern single volume novel) was by nature elected to do just that and nothing more. He was cautioned against attempting a full-length novel, with the result that he,

very rightly and properly, at once set about to prove wiseacres wrong. He succeeded. *Fardorougha* remains yet without a greater amongst Irish novels. It is simple ; it is great of height and reach ; very rarely is it merely sentimental ; and it shews Carleton's possibilities in a part he seldom attempted, but which, when attempted by any novelist, gives the novel as an art-form its special function in spiritual understanding and enlightenment. For it is rich in psychology ; and it displays the fierce paradox of the mind while the arena of contending emotions. The figures of Fardorougha and Honor Donovan, in themselves and in their delicate but unforced contrast, are the work of a master, not merely of fiction, for that, perhaps, is a small thing, but of human sympathy and spiritual understanding, which are very great things.

Fardorougha makes us feel what we have lost. The simple case of its accomplishment is an earnest to us that it was no accidental achievement of his pen, that he could have gone on to the other like demonstrations of his power Why did he not ? For one thing, and it was the main cause, he lacked ambition : not mere literary ambition, but spiritual ambition. For another thing, he lacked a coherent national life within and without, spiritually and socially. The national life at that time was repressed, and without spiritual assurance of itself ; which things found an echo in his own spiritual and intellectual life. And, lastly, private affairs, from this time onward, began to fall into a greater

and greater financial tangle, owing, it must be admitted, mainly to his own fault.

Mentally he was slothful: that is the main fact of the man. Had he not been so, all the other troubles might have adjusted themselves; they would, at least, have been largely righted by the pressure of his intellectual activity, by a ceaseless dissatisfaction with previous attempts in spiritual understanding. He won fame; but at heart valued it little. Had he valued it more, he might have been less content, as he so often was content, with hasty, half-finished, ill-imagined work, impatient with Ireland and with himself, quickly done for ridiculously small sums of money under foolish agreements with publishers. How far this was due to his lack of intellectual and spiritual assurance within it is hard to say. For spiritual ambition springs from spiritual certitude; and spiritual certitude, be it smug or be it eager, is born of an acknowledged place in the scheme of affairs; and this Carleton had not.

The very thing that might most have helped him to that acknowledged place, and did, in fact, correct much of his Cæsar Otwayism, sent him at an acute angle to a fresh point of view. For at that time he met the Young Irelanders, and was a constant visitor at the offices of "The Nation." If he was hardly the type of mind to be much stimulated by the burning hatreds of John Mitchel, it would be thought that the comprehensive culture of Thomas Davis, and the influence

of his friend Charles Gavan Duffy, both of whom won his love and admiration (as, indeed, they could win little else), would have shaken the detached nationalism that had lost for him a thriving purpose in life. One thinks regretfully of the exhibition, if not vision, of life which the writer of *Fardorougha* might have created had his place in the Irish scheme of affairs been more central instead of being partly that of a preacher from without, and partly a purveyor, as he too often let himself become, of national frailties for the comfort of the would-be conqueror. For to that Thomas Davis might have helped the power of his pen. They might have resolved his confusions to a simplicity of outlook: to the simplicity, in fact, that was his own unlearned secret with regard to himself; for when he forgot his conscious attitude, as he so often did, especially in the heat of creation, he rose to just that national purity of outlook that makes him memorable as, in Gavan Duffy's splendid phrase, "an Irish peasant lifting a head like Slieve Donard over his contemporaries." Instead of giving him that simplicity, however, they sent him away, in his changed enthusiasm, at a new angle.

There are surely few pages more weighted with a tragic and bitter history than the bleak opening scene of *The Poor Scholar*, when Dominick McEvoy and his son are "digging potatoes on the side of a hard, barren hill . . . thinly clad . . . as the keen blast swept across

the hill with considerable violence, the sleet-like rain which it bore along pelting into their garments with pitiless severity," and looking "down upon the sheltered inland, which, inhabited chiefly by Protestants and Presbyterians, lay rich and warm-looking under them." It was they, and their like, and their race and blood, who had made that sheltered inland what it was, before the ruthless hand of military conquest swept them to the hard places of the earth. "Look at them, Jimmy *agra*—ay, look at the black thieves! how warm and wealthy they sit there in our ould possessions, an' here we must toil, till our fingers are worn to the stump, upon this thievin' bent. The curse of Cromwell on it. You might as well ax the divil for a blessin' as expect anything like a dacent crop out of it. Look at thim two ridges! —such a poor sthring o' praties is in it!—one here and one there—and yit we must turn up the whole ridge for that same. Well, God sind the time soon when the right will take place, Jimmy *agra*." The heart of Ireland, the heart of history, the heart of simplicity and knowledge, speak in *The Poor Scholar*. Preachment is unnecessary, and points of view are an arrogation, for (despite the white wings of Colonel B—— at the end) narration is enough, that narration expressing a people's own idiom. But when the Young Irelanders touched ancient chords in Carleton, and he recanted the "points of view" of some of the *Traits and Stories*, he took the subject of *The Poor Scholar* as a text, and

became tractarian in the cause to the tune of a full-length novel. *Valentine McClutchy, the Irish Agent, and Solomon Slime, his Religious Attorney ; or, Chronicles of the Castle Cumber Property*, is not exactly a delicate title. It cries its tractarian wares loudly and volubly on the title-page. It is, perhaps, unnecessarily emphatic in its declaration of a point of view, unnecessarily candid as to the compilation of the social encyclopædia. Not that the book is in any degree inaccurate in its exposition of Orangeism and Landlordism, and their accompaniments in conquest. It is, in fact, a valuable historical document, for Carleton, though his sense of proportion went astray, knew his facts too well to go wrong in detail ; and there are scenes and portraits in the book as powerful as he ever wrote. Moreover, it is a very readable book ; but it is only necessary to set it beside *Fardorougha*, for example, to see the difference between the novelist and the tractarian.

When once tractarian zeal attacks the novelist, the outlook for him is perilous. The reformer's energy fell in full strength upon Carleton. Secret societies, sloth, and drink he decided to be the faults of his countrymen, and to correct them he wrote *Rody the Rover*, *Parra Sastha*, and *Art Maguire*. The moral attitude was as before, in " The Christian Examiner " days, but there was a subtle distinction in the point of view conformable with the different company he kept. Previously he had had the sharpness of the critic : now

he has the overwhelming kindness of the admonisher; and puts up nine-pins and knocks them down in the very best style. None of the nine-pins are believable, though not all of them are stationed quite so ineptly as those in *Rody the Rover*. As tales, relying on some manner of truth to life and livelihood, the books are negligible; but they are, in fact, not less negligible as tracts. Carleton need only have read his own works at their best to have found correctives in both these capacities, and he would have approved his art in approving his nation's own people. The simple and central national outlook would, here again, have saved his sanity both as artist and reformer. For a people, struggling under the conditions he from his knowledge has depicted, inevitably found that their industry in their own country (which they proved to the notorious benefit of other countries when they emigrated) was only an excuse for rack-renting, if not dismissal to poorer lands; and, therefore, what appeared to the malevolent as sloth was not that at all, but simply utter despair. That led to terrible poverty and harassing anxieties. The poverty meant malnutrition, dependence only on potatoes for food, and a scarcity of that; the anxieties meant a life with little of brightness and joy, continued without change, save for the worse, through generation upon generation; and each of these things is sufficient to beget an unnatural craving for that which is not only a stimulant to mind and body, however false, but the

procurer of sudden glory, however transient. Moreover, a people struggling under this degrading and self-seeking attempt at conquest (for conquest is always self-seeking) must, by the very virtue of them, rise up against it; and as such an uprising is difficult with a military garrison at its doors, it must band itself together in secret societies. Therefore, if Carleton were anxious to cure these three vices which he perceived, he would have been better employed in helping to remove that which obstructed the life of the people instead of writing futile tracts that could only serve as palliations of that obstruction. For Life, in the attainment of its simple and decent virtues, justifies itself of those who believe in it, and claims only a free space for the exercise of itself; but it will infallibly go awry, and more and more awry, in the case of those who would first hinder it and then hector it.

One may contrast the difference between the tractarian and the novelist by comparing these three books with his novel, *The Black Prophet*, written at the same time. The attitude is something of the same; but the result, how dissimilar! In that powerful tale it was his wish to exhibit the results of famine in the land. He himself, as a lad, had witnessed the scenes he depicted; and as a famine was again raging in the land, he determined to display them by weaving a wild story through them. He himself, in later years, considered *The Black Prophet* his best book. It might well have been; but no book

better shows the weakness that almost always overtakes him when once he approaches the close of his tale. Perhaps he was constitutionally too indolent; perhaps his power failed him when he came to the crisis of the task to which he had set it; perhaps the two things were really one, and he failed imaginatively to grasp the height of his fable because he would not discipline himself—as all art is a discipline of mind before it becomes a beauty of achievement. When emotion should become heightened and intensified it slips into sentimentality. When the outlines of the movement through which the story winds to the desired consummation should be clear and well-marshalled, they become blurred and blotched, displaying Carleton's too-obvious impatience to have finished with the story. Sarah McGowan, for instance, the Prophet's daughter, might have been a fine psychological study; all the framework of that study, indeed, is there; but just as the critical moment in her development approaches she breaks into set, sentimental speeches, and (a sure indication) her dialect disappears for the somewhat formal delivery of her author. Other sentimental touches there are, very characteristic of all Carleton's tales. There is nothing lacking in the strong realism (to use a hackneyed but conveyable literary term) with which he paints the famine scenes; in them we ourselves look back through the years to times that should be unbelievable; but the moment he approaches a beautiful woman neither dirt nor squalor

must touch her. All his heroines are beautiful ; that is an accepted doctrine of the novelist that suffers nothing in his particular handling ; but exactly how some of them contrived to keep their delicate complexions and fair skins under the conditions of their life and hardship is a very puzzling problem in personal management. Their infallible forgivingness, meekness and gentle grace are also, perhaps, rather questions of what the masculine demands than what the feminine always gives. Types like Honor Donovan, for which his mother sat as model, wear those rare virtues with conviction ; but if all young women were like Carleton's beloveds, the world, and the young man's love-portion of it especially, would be a much more insipid affair than it happens to be. That, it will be said, was a quality of the time. As to that we may choose to be sceptical : masculines, now as then, demand qualities that feminines, then as now, in the defence of their variety and vivacity, were not always, we believe, agreeable to give. Certainly they remain unbelievable in Carleton's books, which have passed down to our time, and will pass further.

Much of the same weakness, and the kindred weakness of deep sorrow turned into sentimentality, marks *The Emigrants of Ahadarra*, one of the last books that he wrote from experience, before he began to write of scenes of which he knew nothing in the labour of making a livelihood. Always poor, always writing against time to please his public, his troubles were yet largely of his

own creation. Few men's books then sold better than his ; and, therefore, it is difficult to understand him when he speaks of his life, or at least this forthcoming portion of it, as a " continued and unbroken series of struggle, difficulty, suffering and sorrow as has seldom fallen to the lot of a literary man." Moreover, about this time, through the united efforts of his friends, he received a State pension of £200. He had a large family, and his children had families ; these he supported with more than a father's love of an unbroken home circle ; and by the time he received his pension a good portion of it had to be allocated to the payment of his debts, and the purchase of a heavy life assurance. Still, the problem remains. Had he taken the hint Maria Edgeworth gave him, under no conditions to part with his copyright—that is to say, never to sell his books outright, but to control a profit in proportion to the sales—his might have been a comfortable life. In neglecting that simple wisdom he created his own troubles ; and the further he went the less became his chance of recovery, for he was always writing in expectation of the sum of money that should buy out his proper rights. The result was " struggle, difficulty, suffering and sorrow," though successive editions of some of his books were sold ; and the next result, inevitable in consequence, was that he should consider himself neglected and injured by his countrymen. *The Tithe Proctor*, published soon after his countrymen of all colours of national conviction had

won his pension for him, may be lightly set aside as a bad display of bad temper. For he was to do himself greater injustice than he did his countrymen in this last and worst choice of a point of view. He wrote, generally against time, volume after volume of mixed quality, but mostly unreal; and only occasionally can one trace in his later work the power or the simplicity, the imagination or the vitality of experience, of his earlier books. That much of this later work should remain in circulation (when, for instance, books like *Fardorougha* and the *Traits and Stories* have fallen out of print) is the worst injustice that could have happened to his fame. Though, indeed, it must be admitted that even at his best his lack of conciseness, his shambling way of telling his stories, deprives him of much of the appreciation which he deserves.

Few writers more demand, or would better repay, a careful editing of his work, in which the chaff should be sifted from the grain, and the "points of view" adjusted into order. Stripped thus, his real athletic self would be seen; and he would be found to occupy no mean place among Anglo-Irish writers, old or new. And that is to give praise indeed, for Anglo-Irish letters (that is to say, the use of the English language by those of the Irish race writing of their own affairs) have now won a high place—astonishing, if we consider how lately some Irishmen, deserting their own language, have taken to the tongue of the stranger in books. New men

coming to noise and fame have need of this great brother of their craft arising from half-obscurity. Where will we find a better exhibition of the life and characteristics of the peasantry—which is the most idiomatic fragment of any race, especially of ours, with the high ancestry and pitiful history behind it—than in the *Traits and Stories?* At their least praise they are an indispensable document in history. But they are more than that. They are not only life; they are life imaginatively conceived and presented; they are documents in human understanding as well as in historical happening. Scenes and figures and passages, once read, belong to memory. Where for strength and gusto will we find the equal of that great battle in *The Party Fight,* or for pity the scene in the funeral that followed when the body is brought and laid at the door of the dead man's antagonist? There is vigour in no man's blood who does not fight that fight again in the reading. Who does not delight in Neal Malone, the little tailor, "blue-mowlded for want of a batin'," finding no man who would fight him, or who would treat him with other than good humour, until: "He lost his health, spirits, and everything but his courage. His countenance became pale and peaceful-looking; the bluster departed from him; his body shrunk up like a withered parsnip. Thrice was he compelled to take in his clothes, and thrice did he ascertain that much of his time would be necessarily spent in pursuing his retreating person through the solitude of his almost

deserted garments." And Peter and Ellish Connell, the inimitable pair, Phelim O'Toole, the simple and taciturn Owen McCarthy, Dominick McEvoy and his wife, old Denis O'Shaughnessy, and many another, stand round in a rich and various gallery, to say nothing of the others waiting in the novels beyond. Not often did he, as in *Phil Purcel, the Pig Drover*, dress up a stage Paddy, to suit a Sassenach audience; and when he did, the Sassenach remembered Phil and his phrases gratefully enough. His characterization is intimate and revealing. And if he did not so well succeed with some aspects of the national character, and if the reserved and fierce dignity more characteristic of the West did not enter into his review, yet his reach was wide. There was, however, one strange omission: doubly strange from his pen.

In his Autobiography he tells of the hours he used to spend as a boy on the mountains and in the glens, in quiet and delighted communion with Earth; and through all his books Earth enters in her varied aspects. Stern or appealing, though usually more stern than appealing, she is there, as she is always in Ireland, like an actual presence brooding over her menkind. It is only necessary to read *The Black Prophet* to see how intimate that presence is, and how intimately related to the world of men; but the same thing, in various forms, and in differing degrees, is true of all his tales. In feeling that august presence always about

him, in feeling some part of that large embrace for ever near him, he links himself with all of his race. This is not mysticism ; it is simply a relation of kind with kind ; and the voice of the race speaking in *Dindsenchus*, in rhapsody, in affectionate names for place and land, shews that relation to be no newly-gotten thing, just as it is surely no forgotten thing. It is very strange, therefore, seeing he has this intimacy so lively in himself, that it reveals itself in no one of his characters. If the life that is Earth be no small part of his books, it is because it is he who feels that life, not because he perceives that his people feel it. And there he fails from understanding ; for they know, as he knew, that there is the people of Ireland ; but that there is also Ireland.

DARRELL FIGGIS.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

The Editor's selection concluded with "The Poor Scholar" as representative of the deeper side of Carleton's art and the life he depicted. Unfortunately for reasons of space it was found necessary at the last moment to excise this story. If the present selection is received as widely as is expected the Publishers hope to add a second volume of Carleton's Tales in "Every Irishman's Library."

Carleton's Traits and Stories

NEAL MALONE.

THERE never was a greater-souled or doughtier tailor than little Neal Malone. Though but four feet four in height, he paced the earth with the courage and confidence of a giant; nay, one would have imagined that he walked as if he feared the world itself was about to give way under him. Let none dare to say in future that a tailor is but the ninth part of a man. That reproach had been gloriously taken away from the character of the cross-legged corporation by Neal Malone. He has wiped it off like a stain from the collar of a second-hand coat; he has pressed this wrinkle out of the lying front of antiquity; he has drawn together this rent in the respectability of his profession. No. By him who was breeches-maker to the gods—that is, except, like Highlanders, they eschewed inexpressibles—by him who cut Jupiter's frieze jocks for winter, and eke by the bottom of his thimble, we swear that Neal Malone was *more* that the ninth part of a man!

Setting aside the Patagonians, we maintain that two-thirds of mortal humanity were comprised in Neal; and perhaps we might venture to assert that two-thirds of Neal's humanity were equal to six-thirds of another man's. It is right well known that Alexander the Great

was a little man, and we doubt whether, had Alexander the Great been bred to the tailoring business, he would have exhibited so much of the hero as Neal Malone. Neal was descended from a fighting family, who had signalised themselves in as many battles as ever any single hero of antiquity fought. His father, his grandfather, and his great-grandfather were all fighting men, and his ancestors in general, up, probably, to Con of the Hundred Battles himself. No wonder, therefore, that Neal's blood should cry out against the cowardice of his calling; no wonder that he should be an epitome of all that was valorous and heroic in a peaceable man, for we neglected to inform the reader that Neal, though "bearing no base mind," never fought any man in his own person. That, however, deducted nothing from his courage. If he did not fight, it was simply because he found cowardice universal. No man would engage him; his spirit blazed in vain; his thirst for battle was doomed to remain unquenched, except by whisky, and this only increased it. In short, he could find no foe. He has often been known to challenge the first cudgel-players and pugilists of the parish; to provoke men of fourteen stone weight; and to bid mortal defiance to faction heroes of all grades—but in vain. There was that in him which told them that an encounter with Neal would strip them of their laurels. Neal saw all this with a lofty indignation; he deplored the degeneracy of the times, and thought it hard that the descendant of such a fighting family should be doomed to pass through life peaceably, whilst so many excellent rows and riots took place around him. It was a calamity to see every man's head broken but his own; a dismal thing to observe his neighbours go about with their

bones in bandages, yet his untouched ; and his friends beat black and blue, whilst his own cuticle remained undiscoloured.

" Blur-an'-agers ! " exclaimed Neal one day, when half tipsy in the fair, " am I never to get a bit of fightin' ? Is there no cowardly *spalpeen* to stand afore Neal Malone ? Be this an' be that, I'm blue-mowlded for want of a batin' ! I'm disgracin' my relations by the life I'm ladin' ! Will none o' ye fight me aither for love, money or whisky—frind or inimy, an' bad luck to ye ? I don't care a *traneen* which, only out o' pure friendship let us have a morsel o' the rale kick-up, 'tany rate. Frind or inimy, I say agin, if you regard me—sure, that makes no differ, only let us have the fight."

This excellent heroism was all wasted ; Neal could not find a single adversary. Except he divided himself like Hotspur, and went to buffets, one hand against the other, there was no chance of a fight ; no person to be found sufficiently magnanimous to encounter the tailor. On the contrary, every one of his friends—or, in other words, every man in the parish—was ready to support him. He was clapped on the back until his bones were nearly dislocated in his body, and his hand shaken until his arm lost its cunning at the needle for half-a-week afterwards. This, to be sure, was a bitter business—a state of being past endurance. Every man was his friend—no man was his enemy. A desperate position for any person to find himself in, but doubly calamitous to a martial tailor.

Many a dolorous complaint did Neal make upon the misfortune of having none to wish him ill ; and what rendered this hardship doubly oppressive was the unlucky fact that no exertions of his, however offensive,

could procure him a single foe. In vain did he insult, abuse, and malign all his acquaintances. In vain did he father upon them all the rascality and villainy he could think of. He lied against them with a force and originality that would have made many a modern novelist blush for want of invention—but all to no purpose. The world for once became astonishingly Christian; it paid back all his efforts to excite its resentment with the purest of charity; when Neal struck it on the one cheek, it meekly turned unto him the other. It could scarcely be expected that Neal would bear this. To have the whole world in friendship with a man is beyond doubt rather an affliction. Not to have the face of a single enemy to look upon would decidedly be considered a deprivation of many agreeable sensations by most people as well as by Neal Malone. Let who might sustain a loss, or experience a calamity, it was a matter of indifference to Neal. They were only his friends, and he troubled neither his head nor his heart about them.

Heaven help us! there is no man without his trials; and Neal, the reader perceives, was not exempt from his. What did it avail him that he carried a cudgel ready for all hostile contingencies? or knit his brows and shook his *kippeen* at the fiercest of his fighting friends? The moment he appeared, they softened into downright cordiality. His presence was the signal of peace; for, notwithstanding his unconquerable propensity to warfare, he went abroad as the genius of unanimity, though carrying in his bosom the redoubtable disposition of a warrior; just as the sun, though the source of light himself, is said to be dark enough at bottom.

It could not be expected that Neal, with whatever

fortitude he might bear his other afflictions, could bear such tranquillity like a hero. To say that he bore it as one, would be to basely surrender his character ; for what hero ever bore a state of tranquillity with courage ? It affected his cutting out ! It produced what Burton calls " a windie melancholie," which was nothing else than an accumulation of courage that had no means of escaping, if courage can, without indignity, be ever said to escape. He sat uneasy on his lap-board. Instead of cutting out soberly, he flourished his scissors as if he were heading a faction ; he wasted much chalk by scoring his cloth in wrong places, and even caught his hot goose without a holder. These symptoms alarmed his friends, who persuaded him to go to a doctor. Neal went, to satisfy them ; but he knew that no prescription could drive the courage out of him—that he was too far gone in heroism to be made a coward of by apothecary stuff. Nothing in the pharmacopœia could physic him into a pacific state. His disease was simply the want of an enemy, and an unaccountable superabundance of friendship on the part of his acquaintances. How could a doctor remedy this by a prescription ? Impossible. The doctor, indeed, recommended blood-letting ; but to lose blood in a peaceable manner was not only cowardly, but a bad cure for courage. Neal declined it : he would lose no blood for any man until he could not help it ; which was giving the character of a hero at a single touch. His blood was not to be thrown away in this manner ; the only lancet ever applied to his relations was the cudgel, and Neal scorned to abandon the principles of his family.

His friends, finding that he reserved his blood for more heroic purposes than dastardly phlebotomy, knew

not what to do with him. His perpetual exclamation was, as we have already stated, "I'm blue-mowlded for want of a batin'!" They did everything in their power to cheer him with the hope of a drubbing; told him he lived in an excellent country for a man afflicted with his malady; and promised, if it were at all possible, to create him a private enemy or two, who, they hoped to heaven, might trounce him to some purpose.

This sustained him for a while; but as day after day passed, and no appearance of action presented itself, he could not choose but increase in courage. His soul, like a sword-blade, too long in the scabbard, was beginning to get fuliginous by inactivity. He looked upon the point of his own needle, and the bright edge of his scissors, with a bitter pang when he thought of the spirit rusting within him; he meditated fresh insults, studied new plans, and hunted out cunning devices for provoking his acquaintances to battle, until by degrees he began to confound his own brain, and to commit more grevious oversights in his business than ever. Sometimes he sent home to one person a coat with the legs of a pair of trousers attached to it for sleeves, and despatched to another the arms of the aforesaid coat tacked together as a pair of trousers. Sometimes the coat was made to button behind instead of before; and he frequently placed the pockets in the lower part of the skirts, as if he had been in league with cut-purses.

This was a melancholy situation, and his friends pitied him accordingly.

"Don't be cast down, Neal," said they; "your friends feel for you, poor fellow."

"Divil carry my frinds," replied Neal; "sure, there's not one o' yez frindly enough to be my inimy.

Tare-an'-ounze, what'll I do ? I'm blue-mowlded for want of a batin' ! "

Seeing that their consolation was thrown away upon him, they resolved to leave him to his fate ; which they had no sooner done than Neal had thoughts of taking to the *Skiomachia* as a last remedy. In this mood he looked with considerable antipathy at his own shadow for several nights ; and it is not to be questioned but that some hard battles would have taken place between them, were it not for the cunning of the shadow, which declined to fight him in any other position than with its back to the wall. This occasioned him to pause, for the wall was a fearful antagonist, inasmuch that it knew not when it was beaten. But there was still an alternative left. He went to the garden one clear day about noon, and hoped to have a bout with the shade, free from interruption. Both approached, apparently eager for the combat, and resolved to conquer or die, when a villainous cloud, happening to intercept the light, gave the shadow an opportunity of disappearing ; and Neal found himself once more without an opponent.

" It's aisy known," said Neal, " you haven't the blood in you, or you'd come to the scratch like a man."

He now saw that fate was against him, and that any further hostility towards the shadow was only a tempting of Providence. He lost his health, spirits, and everything but his courage. His countenance became pale and peaceful-looking ; the bluster departed from him ; his body shrank up like a withered parsnip. Thrice was he compelled to take in his clothes, and thrice did he ascertain that much of his time would be necessarily spent in pursuing his retreating person through the solitude of his almost deserted garments.

God knows, it is difficult to form a correct opinion upon a situation so paradoxical as Neal's was. To be reduced to skin and bone by the downright friendship of the world, was, as the sagacious reader will admit, next to a miracle. We appeal to the conscience of any man who finds himself without an enemy, whether he be not a greater skeleton than the tailor; we will give him fifty guineas provided he can show a calf to his leg. We know he could not; for the tailor had none, and that was because he had not an enemy. No man in friendship with the world ever has calves to his legs. To sum up all in a paradox of our own invention, for which we claim the full credit of originality, we now assert that MORE MEN HAVE RISEN IN THE WORLD BY THE INJURY OF THEIR ENEMIES THAN HAVE RISEN BY THE KINDNESS OF THEIR FRIENDS. You may take this, reader, in any sense; apply it to hanging if you like it is, still immutably and immovably true.

One day Neal sat cross-legged, as tailors usually sit, in the act of pressing a pair of breeches; his hands were placed, backs up, upon the handle of his goose, and his chin rested upon the back of his hands. To judge from his sorrowful complexion, one would suppose that he sat rather to be sketched as a picture of misery, or of heroism in distress, than for the industrious purpose of pressing the seams of a garment. There was a great deal of New Burlington Street pathos in his countenance; his face, like the times, was rather out of joint; "the sun was just setting, and his golden beams fell, with a saddened splendour, athwart the tailor's——"—the reader may fill up the picture.

In this position sat Neal, when Mr. O'Connor, the schoolmaster, whose inexpressibles he was turning for the

third time, entered the workshop. Mr. O'Connor himself was as finished a picture of misery as the tailor. There was a patient, subdued kind of expression in his face which indicated a very fair portion of calamity; his eye seemed charged with affliction of the first water; on each side of his nose might be traced two dry channels which, no doubt, were full enough while the tropical rains of his countenance lasted. Altogether, to conclude from appearances, it was a dead match in affliction between him and the tailor; both seemed sad, fleshless, and unthriving.

"Misther O'Connor," said the tailor, when the schoolmaster entered, "won't you be pleased to sit down?"

Mr. O'Connor sat; and after wiping his forehead, laid his hat upon the lap-board, put his half-handkerchief in his pocket, and looked upon the tailor. The tailor, in return, looked upon Mr. O'Connor; but neither of them spoke for some minutes. Neal, in fact, appeared to be wrapped up in his own misery, and Mr. O'Connor in his; or, as we often have much gratuitous sympathy for the distresses of our friends, we question but the tailor was wrapped up in Mr. O'Connor's misery, and Mr. O'Connor in the tailor's.

Mr. O'Connor at length said, "Neal, are my inexpressibles finished?"

"I am now pressin' your inexpressibles," replied Neal; "but, be my sowl, Mr. O'Connor, t's not your nexpressibles I'm thinkin' of. I'm not the ninth part of what I was. I'd hardly make paddin' for a collar now."

"Are you able to carry a staff still, Neal?"

"I've a light hazel one that's handy," said the tailor;

" but where's the use of carryin' it whin I can get no one to fight wid. Sure, I'm disgracin' my relations by the life I'm ladin.' I'll go to my grave w'dout ever batin' a man, or bein' bate myself—that's the vexation. Divil the row ever I was able to kick up in my life ; so that I'm fairly blue-mowlded for want of a batin'. But if you have patience——"

" Patience ! " said Mr. O'Connor, with a shake of the head that was perfectly disastrous even to look at—" patience, did you say, Neal ? "

" Ay," said Neal ; " an', be my sowl, if you deny that I said patience, I'll break your head ! "

" Ah, Neal," returned the other, " I don't deny it—for though I am teaching philosophy, knowledge, and mathematics every day in my life, yet I'm learning patience myself both night and day. No, Neal ; I have forgotten to deny anything. I have not been guilty of a contradiction, out of my own school, for the last fourteen years. I once expressed the shadow of a doubt about twelve years ago, but ever since I have abandoned even doubting. That doubt was the last expiring effort at maintaining my domestic authority —but I suffered for it."

" Well," said Neal, " if you have patience, I'll tell you what afflicts me from beginnin' to endin'."

" I will have patience," said Mr. O'Connor, and he accordingly heard a dismal and indignant tale from the tailor.

" You have told me that fifty times over," said Mr. O'Connor, after hearing the story. " Your spirit is too martial for a pacific life. If you follow my advice, I will teach you how to ripple the calm current of your existence to some purpose. Marry a wife. For twenty-

five years I have given instructions in three branches viz., philosophy, knowledge, and mathematics—I am also well versed in matrimony, and I declare that, upon my misery, and by the contents of all my afflictions, it is my solemn and melancholy opinion that if you marry a wife you will, before three months pass over your concatenated state, not have a single complaint to make touching a superabundance of peace and tranquillity, or a love of fighting."

"Do you mane to say that any woman would make me afeard?" said the tailor, deliberately rising up and getting his cudgel. "I'll thank you merely to go over the words agin till I thrash you widin' an inch o' your life. That's all."

"Neal," said the schoolmaster, meekly, "I won't fight; I have been too often subdued ever to presume on the hope of a single victory. My spirit is long since evaporated: I am like one of your own shreds, a mere selvage. Do you not know how much my habiliments have shrunk in, even within the last five years? Hear me, Neal; and venerate my words as if they proceeded from the lips of a prophet. If you wish to taste the luxury of being subdued—if you are, as you say, blue-mowlded for want of a beating, and sick at heart of a peaceful existence—why, MARRY A WIFE. Neal, send my breeches home with all haste, for they are wanted—you understand. Farewell!"

Mr. O'Connor, having thus expressed himself, departed; and Neal stood with the cudgel in his hand, looking at the door out of which he passed, with an expression of fierceness, contempt, and reflection strongly blended on the ruins of his once heroic visage.

Many a man has happiness within his reach if he

but knew it. The tailor had been, hitherto, miserable because he pursued a wrong object. The schoolmaster, however, suggested a train of thought upon which Neal now fastened with all the ardour of a chivalrous temperament. Nay, he wondered that the family spirit should have so completely seized upon the fighting side of his heart as to preclude all thoughts of matrimony; for he could not but remember that his relations were as ready for marriage as for fighting. To doubt this would have been to throw a blot upon his own escutcheon. He, therefore, very prudently asked himself, to whom, if he did not marry, should he transmit his courage. He was a single man, and, dying as such, he would be the sole depository of his own valour, which, like Junius's secret, must perish with him. If he could have left it as a legacy to such of his friends as were most remarkable for cowardice, why, the case would be altered; but this was impossible, and he had now no other means of preserving it to posterity than by creating a posterity to inherit it. He saw, too, that the world was likely to become convulsed. Wars, as everybody knew, were certain to break out, and would it not be an excellent opportunity for being father to a colonel, or perhaps a general, that might astonish the world. The change visible in Neal after the schoolmaster's last visit absolutely thunderstruck all who knew him. The clothes which he had rashly taken in to fit his shrivelled limbs were once more let out. The tailor expanded with a new spirit; his joints ceased to be supple, as in the days of his valour; his eye became less fiery, but more brilliant. From being martial, he got desperately gallant; but somehow he could not afford to act the hero and lover both at the same time. This, perhaps,

would be too much to expect from a tailor. His policy was better. He resolved to bring all his available energy to bear upon the charms of whatever fair nymph he should select for the honour of matrimony; to waste his spirit in fighting would, therefore, be a deduction from the single purpose in view.

The transition from war to love is by no means so remarkable as we might at first imagine. We quote Jack Falstaff in proof of this; or, if the reader be disposed to reject our authority, then we quote Ancient Pistol himself—both of whom we consider as the most finished specimens of heroism that ever carried a safe skin. Acres would have been a hero had he worn gloves to prevent the courage from oozing out at his palms, or not felt such an unlucky antipathy to the "snug lying in the Abbey"; and as for Captain Bobadil, he never had an opportunity of putting his plan for vanquishing an army into practice. We fear, indeed, that neither his character, nor Ben Jonson's knowledge of human nature, is properly understood; for it certainly could not be expected that a man whose spirit glowed to encounter a whole host could, without tarnishing his dignity, if closely pressed, condescend to fight an individual. But as these remarks on courage may be felt by the reader as an invidious introduction of a subject disagreeable to him, we beg to hush it for the present, and return to the tailor.

No sooner had Neal begun to feel an inclination to matrimony than his friends knew that his principles had veered, by the change now visible in his person and deportment. They saw he had "ratted" from courage, and joined love. Heretofore his life had been all winter, darkened by storm and hurricane. The

fiercer virtues had played the devil with him ; every word was thunder, every look lightning ; but now all that had passed away—before he was the *fortiter in re*, at present he was the *suaviter in modo*. His existence was perfect spring—beautifully vernal. All the amiable and softer qualities began to bud about his heart ; a genial warmth was diffused over him ; his soul got green within him ; every day was serene ; and if a cloud happened to become visible, there was a roguish rainbow astride of it, on which sat a beautiful Iris that laughed down at him, and seemed to say, " Why the Dickens, Neal, don't you marry a wife ? "

Neal could not resist the *afflatus* which descended on him ; an ethereal light dwelt, he thought, upon the face of nature ; the colour of the cloth which he cut out from day to day was, to his enraptured eye, like the colour of Cupid's wings—all purple ; his visions were worth their weight in gold ; his dreams, a credit to the bed he slept on ; and his feelings, like blind puppies, young, and alive to the milk of love and kindness which they drew from his heart. Most of this delight escaped the observation of the world ; for Neal, like your true lover, became shy and mysterious. It is difficult to say what he resembled. No dark lantern ever had more light shut up within itself than Neal had in his soul, although his friends were not aware of it. They knew, indeed, that he had turned his back upon valour ; but beyond this their knowledge did not extend.

Neal was shrewd enough to know that what he felt must be love—nothing else could distend him with happiness, until his soul felt light and bladder-like, but love. As an oyster opens when expecting the tide, so did his soul expand at the contemplation of matri-

mony. Labour ceased to be a trouble to him ; he sang and sewed from morning to night ; his hot goose no longer burned him, for his heart was as hot as his goose ; the vibrations of his head at each successive stitch were no longer sad and melancholy—there was a buoyant shake of exultation in them which showed that his soul was placid and happy within him.

Endless honour be to Neal Malone for the originality with which he managed the tender sentiment ! He did not, like your commonplace lovers, first discover a pretty girl, and afterwards become enamoured of her. No such thing ; he had the passion prepared beforehand—cut out and made up, as it were, ready for any girl whom it might fit. This was falling in love in the abstract ; and let no man condemn it without a trial, for many a long-winded argument could be urged in its defence. It is always wrong to commence business without capital, and Neal had a good stock to begin with. All we beg is, that the reader will not confound it with Platonism, which never marries ; but he is at full liberty to call it Socratism, which takes unto itself a wife, and suffers accordingly.

Let no one suppose that Neal forgot the schoolmaster's kindness, or failed to be duly grateful for it. Mr. O'Connor was the first person whom he consulted touching his passion. With a cheerful soul he waited on that melancholy and gentleman-like man, and in the very luxury of his heart told him that he was in love.

" In love, Neal ! " said the schoolmaster. " May I inquire with whom ? "

" Wid nobody in particular yet," replied Neal ; " but of late I'm got divilish fond o' the girls in general."

"And do you call that being in love, Neal?" said Mr. O'Connor.

'Why, what else would I call it?" returned the tailor. "Amn't I fond of them?"

"Then it must be what is termed the Universal Passion, Neal," observed Mr. O'Connor; "although it is the first time I have seen such an illustration of it as you present in your own person."

"I wish you would advise me how to act," said Neal; "I'm as happy as a prince since I began to get fond o' them, an' to think of marriage."

The schoolmaster shook his head again, and looked rather miserable. Neal rubbed his hands with glee, and looked perfectly happy. The schoolmaster shook his head again, and looked more miserable than before. Neal's happiness also increased on the second rubbing.

Now, to tell the secret at once, Mr. O'Connor would not have appeared so miserable, were it not for Neal's happiness; nor Neal so happy, were it not for Mr. O'Connor's misery. It was all the result of contrast; but this you will not understand unless you be deeply read in modern novels.

Mr. O'Connor, however, was a man of sense, who knew, upon this principle, that the longer he continued to shake his head the more miserable he must become, and the more also would he increase Neal's happiness; but he had no intention of increasing Neal's happiness at his own expense, for, upon the same hypothesis, it would have been for Neal's interest had he remained shaking his head there and getting miserable until the day of judgment. He consequently declined giving the third shake, for he thought that plain conversation

was, after all, more significant and forcible than the most eloquent nod, however badly translated.

"Neal," said he, "could you, by stretching your imagination, contrive to rest contented with nursing your passion in solitude, and love the sex at a distance?"

"How could I nurse and mind my business?" replied the tailor. "I'll never nurse so long as I'll have the wife; and as for 'magination, it depends upon the grain of it whether I can stretch it or not. I don't know that I ever made a coat of it in my life."

"You don't understand me, Neal," said the schoolmaster. "In recommending marriage, I was only driving one evil out of you by introducing another. Do you think that if you abandoned all thoughts of a wife you would get heroic again?—that is, would you take once more to the love of fighting?"

"There is no doubt but I would," said the tailor; "if I miss the wife, I'll kick up such a dust as never was seen in the parish, and you're the first man that I'll kick. But now that I'm in love," he continued, "sure, I ought to look out for the wife."

"Ah, Neal!" said the schoolmaster, "you are tempting destiny. Your temerity be, with all its melancholy consequences, upon your own head."

"Come," said the tailor, "it wasn't to hear you groaning to the tune of *Dhrimmindhoo*, or 'The ould woman rockin' her cradle,' that I came; but to know if you could help me in makin' out the wife. That's the discoorse."

"Look at me, Neal," said the schoolmaster, solemnly; "I am at this moment, and have been any time for the last fifteen years, a living *caveto* against matrimony. I do not think that earth possesses such a luxury as a single,

solitary life. Neal, the monks of old were happy men ; they were all fat and had double chins ; and, Neal, I tell you, that all fat men are in general happy. Care cannot come at them so readily as at a thin man ; before it gets through the strong outworks of flesh and blood with which they are surrounded, it becomes treacherous to its original purpose, joins the cheerful spirits it meets in the system, and dances about the heart in all the madness of mirth ; just like a sincere ecclesiastic who comes to lecture a good fellow against drinking, but who forgets his lecture over his cups, and is laid under the table with such success that he either never comes to finish his lecture, or comes often to be laid under the table. Look at me, Neal, how wasted, fleshless, and miserable I stand before you. You know how my garments have shrunk in, and what a solid man I was before marriage. Neal, pause, I beseech you ; otherwise you stand a strong chance of becoming a nonentity like myself."

" I don't care what I become," said the tailor ; " I can't think that you'd be so unrasonable as to expect that any of the Malones should pass out of the world widout either bein' bate or marrid. Have reason, Mr. O'Connor, an' if you can help me to the wife, I promise to take in your coat the next time for nothin'."

" Well, then," said Mr. O'Connor, " what would you think of the butcher's daughter, Biddy Neil ? You have always had a thirst for blood, and here you may have it gratified in an innocent manner, should you ever become sanguinary again. 'Tis true, Neal, she is twice your size, and possesses three times your strength ; but for that very reason, Neal, marry her if you can. Large animals are placid ; and heaven preserve those

bachelors whom I wish well from a small wife; 'tis such who always wield the sceptre of domestic life, and rule their husbands with a rod of iron."

"Say no more, Mr. O'Connor," replied the tailor; "she's the very girl I'm in love wid, an' never fear but I'll overcome her heart if it can be done by man. Now, step over the way to my house, an' we'll have a sup on the head of it. Who's that calling?"

"Ah! Neal, I know the tones—there's a shrillness in them not to be mistaken. Farewell! I must depart—you have heard the proverb, 'Those who are bound must obey.' Young Jack, I presume, is squalling, and I must either nurse him, rock the cradle, or sing comic tunes for him, though heaven knows with what a disastrous heart I often sing, 'Begone Dull Care,' the 'Rakes of Newcastle,' or 'Peas upon a Trencher.' Neal, I say again, pause before you take this leap in the dark. Pause, Neal, I entreat you. Farewell!"

Neal, however, was gifted with the heart of an Irishman, and scorned caution as the characteristic of a coward. He had, as it appeared, abandoned all design of fighting, but the courage still adhered to him even in making love. He consequently conducted the siege of Biddy Neil's heart with a degree of skill and valour which would not have come amiss to Marshal Gerald at the siege of Antwerp. Locke or Dugald Stewart, indeed, had they been cognisant of the tailor's triumph, might have illustrated the principle on which he succeeded—as to ourselves, we can only conjecture it. Our own opinion is, that they were both animated with a congenial spirit. Biddy was the very pink of pugnacity, and could throw in a body blow, or plant a facer, with singular energy and science. Her prowess hitherto had, we confess, been

displayed only within the limited range of domestic life ; but, should she ever find it necessary to exercise it upon a larger scale, there was no doubt whatsoever, in the opinion of her mother, brothers and sisters, every one of whom she had successfully subdued, that she must undoubtedly distinguish herself. There was certainly one difficulty which the tailor had not to encounter in the progress of his courtship : the field was his own ; he had not a rival to dispute his claim. Neither was there any opposition given by her friends ; they were, on the contrary, all anxious for the match ; and when the arrangements were concluded, Neal felt his hand squeezed by them in succession, with an expression more resembling condolence than joy. Neal, however, had been bred to tailoring, and not to metaphysics ; he could cut out a coat very well, but we do not say that he could trace a principle—as what tailor, except Jeremy Taylor, could ?

There was nothing particular in the wedding. Mr. O'Connor was asked by Neal to be present at it ; but he shook his head, and told him that he had not courage to attend it, or inclination to witness any man's sorrows but his own. He met the wedding-party by accident, and was heard to exclaim with a sigh, as they flaunted past him in gay exuberance of spirits—" Ah, poor Neal ! he is going like one of her father's cattle to the shambles ! Woe is me for having suggested matrimony to the tailor ! He will not long be under the necessity of saying that he ' is blue-mowlded for want of a batin'.' The butcheress will fell him like a Kerry ox, and I may have his blood to answer for, and his discomfiture to feel for, in addition to my own miseries."

On the evening of the wedding-day, about the hour of ten o'clock, Neal—whose spirits were uncommonly exalted, for his heart luxuriated within him—danced with his bridesmaid ; after the dance he sat beside her, and got eloquent in praise of her beauty ; and it is said, too, that he whispered to her, and chucked her chin with considerable gallantry. The *tête-à-tête* continued for some time without exciting particular attention, with one exception ; but that exception was worth a whole chapter of general rules. Mrs. Malone rose up, then sat down again, and took off a glass of the native ; she got up a second time—all the wife rushed upon her heart—she approached them, and, in a fit of the most exquisite sensibility, knocked the bridesmaid down, and gave the tailor a kick of affecting pathos upon the inexpressibles. The whole scene was a touching one on both sides. The tailor was sent on all fours to the floor ; but Mrs. Malone took him quietly up, put him under her arm, as one would a lap-dog, and with stately step marched away to the connubial apartment, in which everything remained very quiet for the rest of the night.

The next morning Mr. O'Connor presented himself to congratulate the tailor on his happiness. Neal, as his friend shook hands with him, gave the schoolmaster's fingers a slight squeeze, such as a man gives who would gently entreat your sympathy. The schoolmaster looked at him, and thought he shook his head. Of this, however, he could not be certain ; for, as he shook his own during the moment of observation, he concluded that it might be a mere mistake of the eye, or perhaps the result of a mind predisposed to be credulous on the subject of shaking heads.

We wish it were in our power to draw a veil, or curtain, or blind of some description over the remnant of the tailor's narrative that is to follow; but as it is the duty of every faithful historian to give the secret causes of appearances which the world in general do not understand, so we think it but honest to go on, impartially and faithfully, without shrinking from the responsibility that is frequently annexed to truth.

For the first three days after matrimony Neal felt like a man who had been translated to a new and more lively state of existence. He had expected, and flattered himself, that the moment this event should take place he would once more resume his heroism, and experience the pleasure of a drubbing. This determination he kept a profound secret—nor was it known until a future period, when he disclosed it to Mr. O'Connor. He intended, therefore, that marriage should be nothing more than a mere parenthesis in his life—a kind of asterisk, pointing, in a note at the bottom, to this single exception in his general conduct—a *nota bene* to the spirit of a martial man, intimating that he had been peaceful only for a while. In truth, he was, during the influence of love over him, and up to the very day of his marriage, secretly as blue-moulded as ever for want of a beating. The heroic penchant lay snugly latent in his heart, unchecked and unmodified. He flattered himself that he was achieving a capital imposition upon the world at large—that he was actually hoaxing mankind in general—and that such an excellent piece of knavish tranquillity had never been perpetrated before his time.

On the first week after his marriage there chanced to be a fair in the next market-town. Neal, after breakfast, brought forward a bunch of *shillelaghs*, in order to

select the best. The wife inquired the purpose of the selection, and Neal declared that he was resolved to have a fight that day, if it were to be had, he said, for "love or money." "The thruth is," he exclaimed, strutting with fortitude about the house—"the thruth is, that I've done the whole of yez—I'm as blue-mowlded as ever for want of a batin'."

"Don't go," said the wife.

"I *will* go," said Neal, with vehemence—"I'll go if the whole parish was to go to prevint me."

In about another half-hour Neal sat down quietly to his business, instead of going to the fair.

Much ingenious speculation might be indulged in upon this abrupt termination to the tailor's most formidable resolution; but, for our own part, we will prefer going on with the narrative, leaving the reader at liberty to solve the mystery as he pleases. In the meantime, we say this much—let those who cannot make it out carry it to their tailor; it is a tailor's mystery, and no one has so good a right to understand it—except, perhaps, a tailor's wife.

At the period of his matrimony Neal had become as plump and as stout as he ever was known to be in his plumpest and stoutest days. He and the schoolmaster had been very intimate about this time; but we know not how it happened that soon afterwards he felt a modest, bride-like reluctance in meeting with that afflicted gentleman. As the eve of his union approached, he was in the habit, during the schoolmaster's visits to his workshop, of alluding, in rather a sarcastic tone, considering the unthriving appearance of his friend, to the increasing lustiness of his person. Nay, he has often leaped up from his lap-board, and, in the strong spirit of exultation,

thrust out his leg in attestation of his assertion, slapping it, moreover, with a loud laugh of triumph, that sounded like a knell to the happiness of his emaciated acquaintance. The schoolmaster's philosophy, however, unlike his flesh, never departed from him; his usual observation was, "Neal, we are both receding from the same point; you increase in flesh, whilst I, heaven help me, am fast diminishing."

The tailor received these remarks with very boisterous mirth, whilst Mr. O'Connor simply shook his head, and looked sadly upon his limbs, now shrouded in a superfluity of garments, somewhat resembling a slender thread of water in a shallow summer stream, nearly wasted away, and surrounded by an unproportionate extent of channel.

The fourth month after the marriage arrived. Neal one day, near its close, began to dress himself in his best apparel. Even then, when buttoning his waistcoat, he shook his head after the manner of Mr. O'Connor, and made observations upon the great extent to which it over-folded him.

"Well," thought he, with a sigh—"this waistcoat certainly did fit me to a T; but it's wondherful to think how—cloth stretches."

"Neal," said the wife, on perceiving him dressed, "where are you bound for?"

"Faith, for life," replied Neal, with a mitigated swagger; "and I'd as soon, if it had been the will of Provid——"

He paused.

"Where are you going?" asked the wife a second time.

" Why," he answered, " only to the dance at Jemmy Connolly's ; I'll be back early."

" Don't go," said the wife.

" I'll go,' said Neal, " if the whole counthry was to prevint me. Thunder an' lightnin', woman, who am I ? " he exclaimed, in a loud but rather infirm voice—" amn't I Neal Malone, that never met a man who'd fight him ! —Neal Malone, that was never beat by MAN ! Why, tare-an'-ounze, woman !—whoo !—I'll get enraged some time, an' play the divil ! Who's afeard, I say ? "

" Don't go," added the wife a third time, giving Neal a significant look in the face.

In about another half-hour Neal sat down quietly to his business, instead of going to the dance !

Neal now turned himself, like many a sage in similar circumstances, to philosophy—that is to say, he began to shake his head upon principle, after the manner of the schoolmaster. He would, indeed, have preferred the bottle upon principle ; but there was no getting at the bottle, except through the wife, and it so happened that by the time it reached him there was little consolation left in it. Neal bore all in silence ; for silence, his friend had often told him, was a proof of wisdom.

Soon after this Neal one evening met Mr. O'Connor by chance upon a plank which crossed a river. This plank was only a foot in breadth, so that no two ndividua's could pass each other upon it. We cannot find words in which to express the dismay of both on finding that they absolutely glided past one another without collision.

Both paused, and surveyed each other solemnly ; but the astonishment was all on the side of Mr. O'Connor.

' Neal," said the schoolmaster, " by all the household

gods, I conjure you to speak, that I may be assured you live!"

The ghost of a blush crossed the churchyard visage of the tailor.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "why the devil did you tempt me to marry a wife?"

"Neal," said his friend, "answer me in the most solemn manner possible; throw into your countenance all the gravity you can assume; speak as if you were under the hands of the hangman, with the rope about your neck, for the question is, indeed, a trying one which I am about to put—are you still 'blue-mowlded for want of beating'?"

The tailor collected himself to make a reply; he put one leg out—the very leg which he used to show in triumph to his friend; but, alas, how dwindled! He opened his waistcoat, and lapped it round him, until he looked like a weasel on its hind legs. He then raised himself up on his tip-toes, and, in an awful whisper, replied, "No!!! the devil a bit I'm blue-mowlded for want of a batin'."

The schoolmaster shook his head in his own miserable manner; but, alas! he soon perceived that the tailor was as great an adept at shaking the head as himself. Nay, he saw that there was a calamitous refinement, a delicacy of shake, in the tailor's vibrations, which gave to his own nod a very commonplace character.

The next day the tailor took in his clothes, and from time to time continued to adjust them to the dimensions of his shrinking person. The schoolmaster and he, whenever they could steal a moment, met and sympathised together. Mr. O'Connor, however, bore up somewhat better than Neal. The latter was subdued in heart

and in spirit; thoroughly, completely, and intensely vanquished. His features became sharpened by misery, for a termagant wife is the whetstone on which all the calamities of a hen-pecked husband are painted by the devil. He no longer strutted as he was wont to do; he no longer carried a cudgel as if he wished to wage a universal battle with mankind. He was now a married man. Sneakingly and with a cowardly crawl did he creep along as if every step brought him nearer to the gallows. The schoolmaster's march of misery was far slower that Neal's: the latter distanced him. Before three years passed he had shrunk up so much that he could not walk abroad of a windy day without carrying weights in his pockets to keep him firm on the earth, which he once trod with the step of a giant. He again sought the schoolmaster, with whom, indeed, he associated as much as possible. Here he felt certain of receiving sympathy; nor was he disappointed. That worthy but miserable man and Neal often retired beyond the hearing of their respective wives, and supported each other by every argument in their power. Often have they been heard, in the dusk of evening, singing behind a remote hedge that melancholy ditty, "Let us both be unhappy together"; which rose upon the twilight breeze with a cautious quaver of sorrow truly heart-rending and lugubrious.

"Neal," said Mr. O'Connor, on one of these occasions, "here is a book which I recommend to your perusal; it is called 'The Afflicted Man's Companion'; try if you cannot glean some consolation out of it."

"Faith," said Neal, "I'm for ever oblaged to you, but I don't want it. I've had 'The Afflicted Man's Companion' too long, and divil an atom of consolation

I can get out of it. I have one o' them, I tell you ; but be me sowl, I'll not undhertake a pair o' them. The very name's enough for me." They then separated.

The tailor's *vis vitæ* must have been powerful, or he would have died. In two years more his friends could not distinguish him from his own shadow—a circumstance which was of great inconvenience to him. Several grasped at the hand of the shadow instead of his ; and one man was near paying it five-and-sixpence for making a pair of small-clothes. Neal, it is true, undeceived him with some trouble, but candidly admitted that he was not able to carry home the money. It was difficult, indeed, for the poor tailor to bear what he felt ; it is true he bore it as long as he could ; but at length he became suicidal, and often had thoughts of " making his own quietus with his bare bodkin." After many deliberations and afflictions he ultimately made the attempt ; but, alas ! he found that the blood of the Malones refused to flow upon so ignominious an occasion. So he solved the phenomenon ; although the truth was, that his blood was not " i' the vein " for 't ; none was to be had. What, then, was to be done ? He resolved to get rid of life by some process ; and the next that occurred to him was hanging. In a solemn spirit he prepared a selvage, and suspended himself from the rafter of his workshop ; but here another disappointment awaited him—he would not hang. Such was his want of gravity that his own weight proved insufficient to occasion his death by mere suspension. His third attempt was at drowning, but he was too light to sink ; all the elements—all his own energies joined themselves, he thought, in a wicked conspiracy to save his life. Having thus tried every avenue to destruction, and failed

in all, he felt like a man doomed to live for ever. Henceforward he shrunk and shrivelled by slow degrees, until in the course of time he became so attenuated that the grossness of human vision could no longer reach him.

This, however, could not last always. Though still alive, he was to all intents and purposes imperceptible. He could now only be heard ; he was reduced to a mere essence—the very echo of human existence, *vox et præterea nihil.* It is true the schoolmaster asserted that he occasionally caught passing glimpses of him ; but that was because he had been himself nearly spiritualised by affliction, and his visual ray purged in the furnace of domestic tribulation. By-and-bye Neal's voice lessened, got fainter and more indistinct, until at length nothing but a doubtful murmur could be heard, which ultimately could scarcely be distinguished from a ringing in the ears.

Such was the awful and mysterious fate of the tailor, who, as a hero, could not, of course, die ; he merely dissolved like an icicle, wasted into immateriality, and finally melted away beyond the perception of mortal sense. Mr. O'Connor is still living, and once more in the fulness of perfect health and strength. His wife, however, we may as well hint, has been dead more than two years.

PHELIM O'TOOLE'S COURTSHIP.

PHELIM O'TOOLE, who had the honour of being that interesting personage, an only son, was heir to a snug estate of half an acre, which had been the family patrimony since the time of his grandfather, Tyrrell O'Toole, who won it from the *Sassenach* at the point of his reaping hook, during a descent once made upon England by a body of *spalpeens*, in the month of August. This resolute little band was led on by Tyrrell, who, having secured about eight guineas by the excursion, returned to his own country with a coarse linen travelling-bag slung across his shoulder, a new hat in one hand, and a staff in the other. On reaching once more his native village of Teernarogarth, he immediately took half an acre, for which he paid a moderate rent in the shape of daily labour as a cottier. On this he resided until death, after which event he was succeeded by his son Larry O'Toole, the father of the "purty boy" who is about to shine in the following pages.

Phelim's father and mother had been married near seven years without the happiness of a family. This to both was a great affliction. Sheelah O'Toole was melancholy from night to morning, and Larry was melancholy from morning to night. Their cottage was silent and solitary; the floor and furniture had not the appearance of any cottage in which Irish children are wont to amuse themselves. When they rose in the morning a miserable stillness prevailed around them;

young voices were not heard—laughing eyes turned not on their parents—the melody of angry squabbles, as the urchins, in their parents' fancy, cuffed and scratched each other—half or wholly naked among the ashes in the morning, soothed not the yearning hearts of Larry and his wife. No, no ; there was none of this. Morning passed in a quietness hard to be borne ; noon arrived, but the dismal, dreary sense of childlessness hung upon the house of their hearts ; night again returned, only to add its darkness to that which overshadowed the sorrowful spirits of this disconsolate couple.

For the first two or three years they bore this privation with a strong confidence that it would not last. The heart, however, sometimes becomes tired of hoping, or unable to bear the burden of expectation, which time only renders heavier. They first began to fret and pine, then to murmur, and finally to recriminate.

Sheelah wished for children, " to have the crathurs to spake to," she said, " and comfort us when we'd get ould an' helpless."

Larry cared not, provided thay had a son to inherit the " half acre." This was the burden of his wishes, for in all their altercations his closing observation usually was, " Well, but what's to become of the half acre ? "

" What's to become of the half acre ? *Arrah*, what do I care for the half acre ? It's not that you ought to be thinkin' of, but the dismal poor house we have, wid not the laugh or schreech of a single *pastiah* in it from year's end to year's end."

" Well, Sheelah ? "

" Well yourself, Larry ? To the *diouol* I pitch your half acre, man."

"To the *diouol* you pitch—What do you fly at me for?"

"Who's flyin' at you? They'd have little tow on their rock that ud fly at you."

"You are flyin' at me; an' only you have a hard face you wouldn't do it."

"A hard face! Indeed, it's well come over wid us, to be tould that by the likes o' you—ha!"

"No matther for that! You had betther keep a soft tongue in your head, an' a civil one, in the manetime. Why did the divil timpt you to take a fancy to me at all?"

"That's it—throw the *grah* an' love I once had for you in my teeth now. It's a manly thing for you to do, an' you may be proud of it. Dear knows it would be betther for me I had fell in consate wid any face but yours."

"I wish to goodness you had! I wouldn't be as I am to-day. There's that half-acre——"

"To the *diouol*, I say, I pitch yourself an' your half acre! Why do you be comin' acrass me wid your half acre? Eh? Why do you?"

"Come, now; don't be puttin' your hands agin your sides an' waggin' your impty head at me, like a rockin' stone."

"An' why do you be aggravatin' at me wid your half acre?"

"Bekase I have a good right to do it. What'll become of it when I d——"

"That for you an' it, you poor excuse!"

"When I di——"

"That for you an' it, I say! That for you an' it, you atomy!"

"What will become of my half acre when I die? Did you hear that?"

"You ought to think of what'll become of yourself when you die—that's what you ought to think of; but little it troubles you, you sinful reprobate! Sure, the neighbours despises you."

"That's a falsity. But they know the life I lade wid you. The edge of your tongue's well known. They pity me for bein' joined to the likes o' you. Your bad tongue's all you're good for."

"Aren't you afeard to be flyin' in the face o' Providence the way you are? an' to be ladin' me sich a heart-scalded life for no rason?"

"It's your own story you're tellin'. Sure, I haven't a day's pace wid you, or ever had these three years. But wait till next harvest, an' if I'm spared I'll go to England. Whin I do, I've a consate in my head that you'll never see my face agin."

"Oh, you know that's an ould story wid you. Many a time you threatened us wid that afore. Who knows but you'd be dhrownded on your way, an' thin we'd get another husband."

"An' be these blessed tongs I'll do it afore I'm much ouldher!"

"An' lave me here to starve an' sthruggle by myself! Desart me, like a villain, to poverty an' hardship! Marciful Mother of Heaven, look down upon me this day! but I'm the ill-thrated an' ill-used poor crathur by a man that I don't, an' never did, desarve it from! An' all in regard that that 'half acre' must go to strangers! Cch! oh!"

"Av! now take to the cryin'—do; rock yourself

over the ashes, an' wipe your eyes wid the corner of your apron; but I say agin, what's to become of the half acre?"

"Oh, God forgive you, Larry! That's the worst I say to you, you poor, half-dead blackguard!"

"Why do you massacray me wid your tongue as you do?"

"Go an—go an. I won't make you an answer, you atomy! That's what I'll do. The heavens above turn your heart this day, and give me strinth to bear my throubles an' heartburnin', sweet Queen o' Consolation! Or take me into the arms of Parodies, sooner nor be as I am, wid a poor baste of a villain, that I never turn my tongue on, barrin' to tell him the kind of a man he is, the blackguard!"

"You're betther than you desarve to be!"

To this Sheelah made no further reply; on the contrary, she sat smoking her pipe with a significant silence, that was only broken by an occasional groan, an ejaculation, or a singularly devout upturning of the eyes to heaven, accompanied by a shake of the head, at once condemnatory and philosophical, indicative of her dissent from what he said, as well as of her patience in bearing it.

Larry, however, usually proceeded to combat all her gestures by *viva voce* argument: for every shake of her head he had an appropriate answer, but without being able to move her from the obstinate silence she maintained. Having thus the field to himself, and feeling rather annoyed by the want of an antagonist, he argued on in the same form of dispute; whilst she, after first calming her own spirit by the composing effects of the pipe, usually cut him short with—

"Here, take a blast o' this; maybe it'll settle you."

This was received in silence. The good man smoked on, and every puff appeared as an evaporation of his anger. In due time he was as placid as herself; drew his breath in a grave composed manner; laid his pipe quietly on the hob, and went about his business as if nothing had occurred between them.

These bickerings were strictly private, with the exception of some disclosures made to Sheelah's mother and sisters. Even these were thrown out rather as insinuations that all was not right, than as direct assertions that they lived unhappily. Before strangers they were perfect turtles.

Larry, according to the notices of his life furnished by Sheelah, was "as good a husband as ever broke the world's bread"; and Sheelah "was as good a poor man's wife as ever threw a gown over her shoulders." Notwithstanding all this caution, their little quarrels took wind, their unhappiness became known. Larry, in consequence of a failing he had, was the cause of this. He happened to be one of those men who can conceal nothing when in a state of intoxication. Whenever he indulged in liquor too freely, the veil which discretion had drawn over their recriminations was put aside, and a dolorous history of their weaknesses, doubts, hopes, and wishes most unscrupulously given to every person on whom the complainant could fasten. When sober he had no recollection of this, so that many a conversation of cross-purposes took place between him and his neighbours with reference to the state of his domestic inquietude and their want of children.

One day a poor mendicant came in at dinner-hour, and stood as if to solicit alms. It is customary in Ireland

when any person of that description appears during meal-times, to make him wait until the meal is over, after which he is supplied with the fragments. No sooner had the *boccagh*—as a certain class of beggars is termed—advanced past the jamb than he was desired to sit until the dinner should be concluded. Meantime, with the tact of an adept in his calling, he began to ingratiate himself with Larry and his wife; and after sounding the simple couple upon their private history, he discovered that want of children was the occasion of their unhappiness.

"Well, good people," said the pilgrim, after listening to a dismal story on the subject, "don't be cast down, sure, whether or not. There's a holy well that I can direct yees to in the county ——. Any one wid trust in the saint that's over it, who'll make a pilgrimage to it on the patthern day, won't be the worse for it. When you go there," he added, "jist turn to a lucky stone that's at the side of the well, say a rosary before it, and at the end of every dicken (decade) kiss it once, ache of you. Then you're to go round the well nine times upon your bare knees, sayin' your pathers and aves all the time. When that's over, lave a ribbon or a bit of your dress behind you, or somethin' by way of an offerin'; thin go into a tent an' refresh yourselves, an', for that matther, take a dance or two; come home, live happily, an' trust to the holy saint for the rest."

A gleam of newly-awakened hope might be discovered lurking in the eyes of this simple pair, who felt those natural yearnings of heart incident to such as are without offspring.

They looked forward with deep anxiety to the anniversary of the patron saint; and when it arrived, none

certainly who attended it felt a more absorbing interest in the success of the pilgrimage than they did.

The days on which these pilgrimages are performed at such places are called pattern or patron days. The journey to holy wells or holy lakes is termed a pilgrimage, or more commonly a station. It is sometimes enjoined by the priest as an act of penance, and sometimes undertaken voluntarily as a devotional work of great merit in the sight of God. The crowds in many places amount to from five hundred to a thousand, and often to two, three, four, or ten thousand people.

These stations have, for the most part, been placed in situations remarkable for wild and savage grandeur, or for soft, exquisite, and generally solitary beauty. They may be found on the high and rugged mountain-top or sunk in the bottom of some still and lonely glen, far removed from the ceaseless din of the world. Immediately beside them, or close in their vicinity, stand the ruins of, probably, a picturesque old abbey, or perhaps a modern chapel. The appearance of these grey, ivy-covered walls is strongly calculated to stir up in the minds of the people the memory of bygone times, when their religion, with its imposing solemnities, was the religion of the land.

Let the reader, in order to understand the situation of the place we are describing, imagine to himself a stupendous cliff overhanging a green glen, into which tumbles a silver stream down a height of two or three hundred feet. At the bottom of this rock, a few yards from the basin formed by the cascade, in a sunless nook, was a well of cool, delicious water. This was the "holy well," out of which issued a slender stream that joined the rivulet formed by the cascade. On the shrubs which

grew out of the crag-cliffs around it might be seen innumerable rags bleached by the weather out of their original colour, small wooden crosses, locks of human hair, buttons, and other substitutes for property—poverty allowing the people to offer it only by fictitious emblems. Lower down in the glen, on the river's bank, was a smooth green, admirably adapted for the dance which, notwithstanding the religious rites, is the heart and soul of a pattern.

On that morning a vast influx of persons, male and female, old and young, married and single, crowded eagerly towards the well. Among them might be noticed the blind, the lame, the paralytic, and such as were afflicted with various other diseases; nor were those good men who had no offspring to be omitted. The mendicant, the pilgrim, the *boccagh*, together with every other description of impostors remarkable for attending such places, were the first on the ground, all busy in their respective vocations. The highways, the fields, and the *boreens*, or bridle-roads, were filled with living streams of people pressing forward to this great scene of fun and religion. The devotees could in general be distinguished from the country folks by their pharisaical and penitential visages, as well as by their not wearing shoes, for the stations to such places were formerly made with bare feet—most persons now, however, content themselves with stripping off their shoes and stockings on coming within the precincts of the holy ground. Human beings are not the only description of animals that perform pilgrimages to holy wells and blessed lakes. Cows, horses, and sheep are made to go through their duties, either by way of prevention or cure of the diseases incident to them.

This is not to be wondered at when it is known that every domestic animal has its patron saint, to whom its owner may at any time pray on its behalf.

When the crowd was collected, nothing in the shape of an assembly could surpass it in the originality of its appearance. In the glen were constructed a number of tents, where whisky and refreshments might be had in abundance. Every tent had a fiddler or a piper; many two of them. From the top of a pole that ran up from the roof of each tent was suspended the symbol by which the owner of it was known by his friends and acquaintances. Here swung a salt herring or a turf, there a shillelah, in a third place a shoe, in a fourth place a wisp of hay, in a fifth an old hat, and so on with the rest.

The tents stood at a short distance from the scene of devotion at the well, but not so far as to prevent the spectator from both seeing and hearing what went on in each. Around the well, on bare knees, moved a body of people, thickly wedged together, some praying, some screaming, some excoriating their neighbour's shins, and others dragging them out of their way by the hair of the head. Exclamations of pain from the sick or lame, thumping oaths in Irish, recriminations in broken English, and prayers in bog Latin, all rose at once to the ears of the patron saint, who, we are inclined to think —could he have heard or seen his worshippers—would have disclaimed them altogether.

"For the sake of the Holy Virgin, keep your sharp elbows out o' my ribs."

"My blessin' an you, young man, and don't be lanin' an me, i' you plase!"

"*Damnho sheery orth, a rogarah Ruah!* what do you mane? Is it my back you're breakin'?"

"Hell purshue you, you ould sinner! can't you keep the spike of your crutch out o' my stomach? If you love me tell me so; but, by the livin' farmer, I'll take no such hints as that!"

"I'm a pilgrim, an' don't break my leg upon the rock, an' my blessin' an you!"

"Oh, murdher, *sheery!* my poor child 'ill be smodhered!"

"My heart's curse an you! is it the ould cripple you're thrampin' over?"

"Here, Barny, blood alive, give this purty young girl a lift, your sowl, or she'll be undhermost!"

"'Och, 'twas on a Christmas mornin'
That Jeeroosillim was born in,
The Holy Land——'

Oh, my neck's broke!—the curse—Oh! I'm kilt fairly so I am! The curse o' Cromwell an you, an' hould away——

'The Holy Land adornin',
All by the Baltic Say.
Three angels on a station,
All in deep meditation,
Wor takin' raycrayation,
All by the———'

Contints 'o the book, if you don't hould away, I say agin, an' let me go on wid my *rann*, it'll be worse for you!—

'Wor takin' raycrayation,
All by the Baltic Say!!'"

"Help the ould woman there."

"Queen o' patriots, pray for us! St. Abraham—Go the the divil, you *bosthoon;* is it crushin' my sore leg you are?—St. Abraham pray for us! St. Isinglass pray for us! St. Jonathan—*Musha*, I wisht you wor in

America, honest man, instid o' twistin' my arm like a gad!—St. Jonathan, pray for us! Holy Nineveh, look down upon us wid compression an' resolution this day! Blessed Jerooslim, throw down compuncture an' meditation upon us Christyeens assembled here afore you to offer up our sins! Oh, grant us, blessed Catasthrophy, the holy virtues of timptation and solitude, through the improvement an' accommodation of St. Kolumbkill! To him I offer up this button, a bit o' the waistband o' my own breeches, an' a taste of my wife's petticoat, in remimbrance of us havin' made this holy station; an' may they rise up in glory to prove it for us at the last day! Amin!"

Such was the character of the prayers and ejaculations which issued from the lips of the motley group that scrambled, and crushed, and screamed on their knees around the well. In the midst of this ignorance and absurdity there were visible, however, many instances of apparent piety, goodness of heart, and simplicity of character. From such you could hear neither oath nor exclamation. They complied with the usages of the place modestly and attentively; though not insensible, at the same time, to the strong disgust which the general conduct of those who were both superstitious and wicked was calculated to excite. A little from the well, just where its waters mingled with those of the cascade, men and women might be seen washing the blood off their knees, and dipping such parts of their body as were afflicted with local complaints into the stream. This part of the ceremony was anything but agreeable to the eye. Most of those who went round the well drank its waters; and several of them filled flasks and bottles with it, which they brought

home for the benefit of such members of their family as could not attend in person.

Whilst all this went forward at the well, scenes of a different kind were enacted lower down among the tents. No sooner had the penitents got the difficult rites of the station over than they were off to the whisky; and decidedly, after the grinding of their bare knees upon the hard rock—after the pushing, crushing, and exhaustion of bodily strength which they had been forced to undergo—we say that the comforts and refreshments to be had in the tents were very seasonable. Here the dancing, shouting, singing, courting, drinking, and fighting formed one wild uproar of noise that was perfectly astounding. The leading boys and the prettiest girls of the parish were all present, partaking in the rustic revelry. Tipsy men were staggering in every direction, fiddles were playing, pipes were squeaking, men were rushing in detached bodies to some fight, women were doctoring the heads of such as had been beaten, and factions were collecting their friends for a fresh battle. Here you might see a grove of shillelahs up, and hear the crash of the onset; and in another place, the heads of the dancing parties bobbing up and down in brisk motion among the crowd that surrounded them. The pilgrim, having now gone through his station, stood hemmed in by a circle of those who wanted to purchase his beads or his scapulars. The ballad-singer had his own mob, from among whom his voice might be heard rising in its purest tones to the praise of

> "Brave O'Connell, the Liberathur,
> An' great Salvathur of Ireland's Isle!"

As evening approached, the whisky brought out the senseless prejudices of parties and factions in a manner

quite consonant to the habits of the people. Those who, in deciding their private quarrels, had in the early part of the day beat and abused each other, now united as the subordinate branches of a greater party for the purpose of opposing in one general body some other hostile faction. These fights are usually commenced by a challenge from one party to another, in which a person from the opposite side is simply and often very good-humouredly invited to assert that "black is the white of his enemy's eye," or to touch the old coat which he is pleased to trail after him between the two opposing powers. This characteristic challenge is soon accepted; the knocking down and yelling are heard; stones fly, and every available weapon is pressed into the service on both sides. In this manner the battle proceeds, until probably a life or two is lost. Bones, too, are savagely broken, and blood copiously spilled, by men who scarcely know the remote cause of the enmity between the parties.

Such is a hasty sketch of the Pattern, as it is called in Ireland, at which Larry and Sheelah duly performed their station. We, for our part, should be sorry to see the innocent pastimes of a people abolished; but surely customs which perpetuate scenes of profligacy and crime should not be suffered to stain the pure and holy character of religion.

It is scarcely necessary to inform our readers that Larry O'Toole and Sheelah complied with every rite of the station. To kiss the "Lucky Stone," however, was their principal duty. Larry gave it a particularly honest smack, and Sheelah impressed it with all the ardour of a devotee. Having refreshed themselves in the tent, they returned home, and in somewhat less than

a year from that period found themselves the happy parents of an heir to the half-acre, no less a personage than young Phelim, who was called after St. Phelim, the patron of the "Lucky Stone."

The reader perceives that Phelim was born under particularly auspicious influence. His face was the herald of affection everywhere. From the moment of his birth Larry and Sheelah were seldom known to have a dispute. Their whole future life was, with few exceptions, one unchanging honeymoon. Had Phelim been deficient in comeliness, it would have mattered not a *crona bawn*. Phelim, on the contrary, promised to be a beauty; both his parents thought it, felt it, asserted it; and who had a better right to be acquainted, as Larry said, "wid the outs an' ins, the ups an' downs, of his face, the darlin' swaddy?"

For the first ten years of his life Phelim could not be said to owe the tailor much; nor could the covering which he wore be, without more antiquarian lore than we can give to it, exactly classed under any particular term by which the various parts of human dress are known. He himself, like some of our great poets, was externally well acquainted with the elements. The sun and he were particularly intimate; wind and rain were his brothers, and frost also distantly related to him. With mud he was hand and glove, and not a bog in the parish or a quagmire in the neighbourhood but sprung up under Phelim's tread, and threw him forward with the brisk vibration of an old acquaintance. Touching his dress, however, in the early part of life, if he was clothed with nothing else, he was clothed with mystery. Some assert that a cast-off pair of his father's nether garments might be seen upon him each Sunday, the wrong side

foremost, in accommodation with some economy of his mother's, who thought it safest, in consequence of his habits, to join them in this inverted way to a cape which he wore on his shoulders. We ourselves have seen one who saw another who saw Phelim in a pair of stockings which covered him from his knee-pans to his haunches, where, in the absence of waistbands, they made a pause, a breach existing from that to the small of his back. The person who saw all this affirmed, at the same time, that there was a dearth of cloth about the skirts of the integument which stood him instead of a coat. He bore no bad resemblance, he said, to a moulting fowl, with scanty feathers, running before a gale in the farmyard.

Phelim's want of dress in his merely boyish years, being, in a great measure, the national costume of some hundred thousand young Hibernians in his rank of life, deserves a still more particular notice. His infancy we pass over ; but from the period at which he did *not* enter into small-clothes, he might be seen every Sunday morning, or on some important festival, issuing from his father's mansion, with a piece of old cloth tied about him from the middle to the knees, leaving a pair of legs visible that were mottled over with characters which would, if found on an Egyptian pillar, put an antiquary to the necessity of constructing a new alphabet to decipher them. This or the inverted breeches, with his father's flannel waistcoat, or an old coat that swept the ground at least two feet behind him, constituted his state dress. On week days he threw off this finery, and contented himself, if the season were summer, with appearing in a dun-coloured shirt, which resembled a noun-substantive, for it could stand alone. The absence of soap and water is sometimes used as a substitute for milling linen

among the lower Irish ; and so effectually had Phelim's single change been milled in this manner, that, when disenshirting at night, he usually laid it standing at his bedside, where it reminded one of frosted linen in everything but whiteness.

This, with but little variation, was Phelim's dress until his tenth year. Long before that, however, he evinced those powers of attraction which constituted so remarkable a feature in his character. He won all hearts—the chickens and ducks were devotedly attached to him ; the cow, which the family always intended to buy, was in the habit of licking Phelim in his dreams ; the two goats, which they actually did buy, treated him like one of themselves. Among the first and last he spent a great deal of his early life ; for, as the floor of his father's house was but a continuation of the dunghill, or the dunghill a continuation of the floor, we know not rightly which, he had a larger scope and a more unsavoury pool than usual for amusement. Their dunghill, indeed, was the finest of its size and kind to be seen ; quite a tasteful thing, and so convenient, that he could lay himself down at the hearth and roll out to its foot, after which he ascended it on his legs with all the elasticity of a young poet triumphantly climbing Parnassus.

One of the greatest wants which Phelim experienced in his young days was the want of a capacious pocket. We insinuate nothing ; because with respect to his agility in climbing fruit trees, it was only a species of exercise to which he was addicted—the eating and carrying away of the fruit being merely incidental, or probably the result of abstraction, which, as every one knows, proves what is termed " the absence of

genius." In these ambitious exploits, however, there is no denying that he often bitterly regretted the want of a pocket; and in connection with this we have only to add that most of his solitary walks were taken about orchards and gardens, the contents of which he has been seen to contemplate with interest. This, to be sure, might proceed from a provident regard to health, for it is a well-known fact that he has frequently returned home in the evenings distended like a boa constrictor after a gorge; yet no person was ever able to come at the cause of his inflation. There were, to be sure, suspicions abroad, and it was mostly found that depredations in some neighbouring orchard or garden had been committed a little before the periods in which it was supposed the distension took place. We mention these things, after the example of those "d——d good-natured" biographers who write great men's lives of late, only for the purpose of showing that there could be no truth in such suspicions. Phelim, we assure an enlightened public, was voraciously fond of fruit; he was frequently inflated, too, after the manner of those who indulge therein to excess—fruit was always missed immediately after the periods of his distension, so that it was impossible he could have been concerned in the depredations then made upon the neighbouring orchards. In addition to this we would beg modestly to add that the pomonian temperament is incompatible with the other qualities for which he was famous. His parents were too ignorant of those little eccentricities, which, had they known them, would have opened up a correct view of the splendid materials for village greatness which he possessed, and which probably were nipped in their bud for the want of a pocket to his breeches, or rather by the want of

breeches to his pocket, for such was the wayward energy of his disposition that he ultimately succeeded in getting the latter, though it certainly often failed him to procure the breeches. In fact, it was a misfortune to him that he was the son of his father and mother at all. Had he been a second Melchizedec, and got into breeches in time, the virtues which circumstances suppressed in his heart might have flourished like cauliflowers, though the world would have lost all the advantages arising from the splendour of his talents at going naked.

Another fact, in justice to his character, must not be omitted. His penchant for fruit was generally known; but few persons, at the period we are describing, were at all aware that a love of whisky lurked as a predominant trait in his character, to be brought out at a future era in his life.

Before Phelim reached his tenth year he and his parents had commenced hostilities. Many were their efforts to subdue some peculiarities of his temper which then began to appear. Phelim, however, being an only son, possessed high vantage-ground. Along with other small matters, which he was in the habit of picking up, might be reckoned a readiness at swearing. Several other things also made their appearance in his parents' cottage, for whose presence there, except through his instrumentality, they found it rather difficult to account. Spades, shovels, rakes, tubs, frying-pans, and many other articles of domestic use were transferred, as if by magic, to Larry's cabin.

As Larry and his wife were both honest, these things were of course restored to their owners the moment they could be ascertained. Still, although this honest couple's integrity was known, there were many significant looks

turned upon Phelim, and many spirited prophecies uttered with especial reference to him, all of which hinted at the probability of his dying something in the shape of a perpendicular death. This habit, then, of adding to their furniture was one cause of the hostility between him and his parents—we say one, for there were at least a good round dozen besides. His touch, for instance, was fatal to crockery; he stripped his father's Sunday clothes of their buttons with great secrecy and skill; he was a dead shot at the panes of his neighbour's windows; a perfect necromancer at sucking eggs through pin-holes; took great delight in calling home the neighbouring farmers' workmen to dinner an hour before it was ready; and was, in fact, a perfect master in many other ingenious manifestations of character ere he reached his twelfth year.

Now it was about this period that the smallpox made its appearance in the village. Indescribable was the dismay of Phelim's parents lest he, among others, might become a victim to it. Vaccination had not then surmounted the prejudices with which every discovery beneficial to mankind is at first met; and the people were left principally to the imposture of quacks, or the cunning of certain persons called "fairy men" or "sonsie" women. Nothing remained now but that this formidable disease should be met by all the power and resources of superstition. The first thing the mother did was to get a gospel consecrated by the priest, for the purpose of guarding Phelim against evil. What is termed a gospel, and worn as a kind of charm about the person, is simply a slip of paper on which are written by the priest the first few verses of the Gospel of St. John. This, however, being worn for no specific

purpose, was incapable of satisfying the honest woman. Superstition had its own peculiar remedy for the smallpox, and Sheelah was resolved to apply it Accordingly, she borrowed a neighbour's ass, drove it home, with Phelim, however, on its back, took the interesting youth by the nape of the neck, and, in the name of the Trinity, shoved him three times under it and three times over it. She then put a bit of bread into its mouth, until the ass had mumbled it a little, after which she gave the savoury morsel to Phelim as a *bonne bouche*. This was one preventive against the smallpox; but another was to be tried.

She next clipped off the extremities of Phelim's elf-locks, tied them in linen that was never bleached, and hung them beside the gospel about his neck. This was her second cure; but there was still a third to be applied. She got the largest onion possible, which, having cut it into nine parts, she hung from the roof-tree of the cabin, having first put the separated parts together. It is supposed that this has the power of drawing infection of any kind to itself. It is permitted to remain untouched until the disease has passed from the neighbourhood, when it is buried as far down in the earth as a single man can dig. This was a third cure; but there was still a fourth. She borrowed ten asses' halters from her neighbours, who, on hearing that they were for Phelim's use, felt particular pleasure in obliging her. Having procured these, she pointed them one by one at Phelim's neck, until the number nine was completed. The tenth she put on him, and with the end of it in her hand, led him like an ass, nine mornings before sunrise, to a south-running stream, which he was obliged to cross. On doing this, two conditions were to be fulfilled on the part

of Phelim : he was bound, in the first place, to keep his mouth filled, during the ceremony, with a certain fluid, which must be nameless ; in the next, to be silent from the moment he left home until his return.

Sheelah, having satisfied herself that everything calculated to save her darling from the smallpox was done, felt considerably relieved, and hoped that, whoever might be infected, Phelim would escape. On the morning when the last journey to the river had been completed, she despatched him home with the halters. Phelim, however, wended his way to a little hazel copse below the house, where he deliberately twined the halters together, and erected a swing-swang, with which he amused himself till hunger brought him to his dinner.

" Phelim, you idle thief, what kep' you away till now ? "

" Oh, mudher, mudher, gi' me a piece o' *arran* " (bread).

" Why, here's the praties done for your dinner. What kep' you ? "

" Oh, begorra, it's well you ever see me at all, so it is ? "

" Why," said his father, " what happened you ? "

" Oh, bedad, a terrible thing all out. As I was crassin' Dunroe Hill, I thramped on hungry grass.* First I didn't know what kem over me, I got so wake ; and every step I wint 'twas waker an' waker I was growin', till at long last down I dhrops, and couldn't move hand or fut. I dunna how long I lay there, so I don't ; but, anyhow, who should be *sthreelin'* acrass the hill but an ould *boccagh*.

* There is a belief that anyone passing over ground chosen by fairies for their revels will feel acute pangs of hunger.

" ' My *bouchaleen dhas*,' says he, ' you're in a bad state, I find. You've thramped upon Dunroe hungry grass, an' only for somethin' it's a *prabeen* you'd be afore ever you'd see home. Can you spake at all ? ' says he.

" ' Oh, murdher,' says I, ' I b'lieve not.'

" ' Well, here,' says the *boccagh*, ' open your purty *gob*, an' take in a thrifle of this male, an' you'll soon be stout enough.' Well, to be sure, it bates the world ! I had hardly tasted the male, whin I found myself as well as ever ; bekase, you know, mudher, that's the cure for it. ' Now,' says the *boccagh*, ' this is the spot the fairies planted their hungry grass an, so you'll know it agin when you see it. What's your name ? ' says he.

" ' Phelim O'Toole,' says I.

" ' Well,' says he, ' go home an' tell your father an' mother to offer up a prayer to St Phelim, your name-sake, in regard that only for him you'd be a *corp* before any relief would a come near you—or, at any rate, wid the fairies.' "

The father and mother, although with a thousand proofs before them that Phelim, so long as he could at all contrive a lie, would never speak the truth, yet were so blind to his well-known propensity that they always believed the lie to be truth until they discovered it to be a falsehood. When he related a story, for instance, which carried not only improbability, but impossibility, on the face of it, they never questioned his veracity. The neighbours, to be sure, were vexed and nettled at the obstinacy of their credulity, especially on reflecting that they were as sceptical in giving credence to the narrative of any other person as all rational people ought to be. The manner of training up Phelim, and Phelim's method of governing them, had become a by-word in

the village. "Take a sthraw to him, like Sheelah O'Toole," was often ironically said to mothers remarkable for mischievous indulgence to their children.

The following day proved that no charm could protect Phelim from the smallpox. Every symptom of that disease became quite evident; and the grief of his doting parents amounted to distraction. Neither of them could be declared perfectly sane; they knew not how to proceed—what regimen to adopt for him, nor what remedies to use. A week elapsed, but each succeeding day found him in a more dangerous state. At length, by the advice of some of the neighbours, an old crone called "Sonsie Mary" was called in to administer relief through the medium of certain powers which were thought to be derived from something holy and also supernatural. She brought a mysterious bottle, of which he was to take every third spoonful three times a day; it was to be administered by the hand of a young girl of virgin innocence, who was also to breathe three times down his throat, holding his nostrils closed with her fingers. The father and mother were to repeat a certain number of prayers, to promise against swearing, and to kiss the hearthstone nine times—the one turned north, and the other south. All these ceremonies were performed with care, but Phelim's malady appeared to set them at defiance; and the old crone would have lost her character in consequence, were it not that Larry, on the day of the cure, after having promised not to swear, let fly an oath at a hen whose cackling disturbed Phelim. This saved her character, and threw Larry and Sheelah into fresh despair.

They had nothing now for it but the "fairy man," to whom, despite the awful mystery of his character,

they resolved to apply rather than see their only son taken from them for ever. Larry proceeded without delay to the wise man's residence, after putting a small phial of holy water in his pocket to protect himself from fairy influence. The house in which this person lived was admirably in accordance with his mysterious character. One gable of it was formed by the mound of a fairy *rath*, against which the cabin stood endwise. Within a mile there was no other building ; the country around it was a sheep-walk, green, and beautifully interspersed with two or three solitary glens, in one of which might be seen a cave, that was said to communicate under ground with the *rath*. A ridge of high-peaked mountains ran above it, whose evening shadow, in consequence of their form, fell down on each side of the *rath*, without obscuring its precincts. It lay south ; and such was the power of superstition, that during summer the district in which it stood was thought to be covered with a light and silence decidedly supernatural. In spring, it was the first to be in verdure, and in autumn the last. Nay, in winter itself the *rath* and the adjoining valleys never ceased to be green. These circumstances were not attributed to the nature of the soil, to its southern situation, nor to the fact of its being pasture land, but simply to the power of the fairies, who were supposed to keep its verdure fresh for their own revels.

When Larry entered the house, which had an air of comfort and snugness beyond the common, a tall, thin, pike of a man, about sixty years of age, stood before him. He wore a brown greatcoat that fell far short of his knees ; his small-clothes were closely fitted to thighs not thicker than hand telescopes ; on his legs were drawn grey woollen stockings, rolled up about

six inches over his small-clothes ; his head was covered by a bay bobwig, on which was a little round hat, with the edge of the leaf turned up in every direction. His face was short and sallow, his chin peaked, his nose small and turned up. If we add to this a pair of skeleton-like hands and arms projecting about eight inches beyond the sleeves of his coat, two fiery-ferret eyes, and a long, small hollow wand higher than himself, we have the outline of this singular figure.

" God save you, nabour," said Larry.

" Save you, save you, nabour," he replied, without pronouncing the name of the Deity.

" This is a thryin' time," said Larry, " to them that has childher."

The fairy man fastened his red glittering eyes upon him with a sinister glance that occasioned Larry to feel rather uncomfortable.

" So you venthured to come to the fairy man ? "

" It is about our son, an' he all we ha——"

" Whisht ! " said the man, waving his hand with a commanding air. " Whisht ! I wish you wor out o' this, for it's a bad time to be here. Listen ! Listen ! Do you hear nothing ? "

Larry changed colour. " I do," he replied—" the Lord protect me ! Is that them ? "*

" What did you hear ? " said the man.

" Why," returned the other, " I heard the bushes of the *rath* all movin', just as if a blast o' wind came among them ! "

" Whisht ! " said the fairy man, " they're here ; you musn't open your lips while you're in the house. I know what you want, an' we'll see your son. Do you

* The fairies.

hear anything more ? If you do, lay your forefinger along your nose ; but don't spake."

Larry heard, with astonishment, the music of a pair of bagpipes. The tune played was one which, according to a popular legend, was first played by Satan ; it is called " Go to the Devil and Shake Yourself." To our own knowledge the peasantry in certain parts of Ireland refuse to sing it for the above reason. The mystery of the music was heightened, too, by the fact of its being played, as Larry thought, behind the gable of the cabin which stood against the side of the *rath*, out of which, indeed, it seemed to proceed.

Larry laid his finger along his nose, as he had been desired ; and this appearing to satisfy the fairy man, he waved his hand to the door, thus intimating that his visitor should depart ; which he did immediately, but not without observing that this wild-looking being closed and bolted the door after him.

It is unnecessary to say that he was rather anxious to get off the premises of the good people ; he therefore lost little time until he arrived at his own cabin ; but judge of his wonder when, on entering it, he found the long-legged spectre awaiting his return.

" *Bonaght dhea orrin !* " he exclaimed, starting back ; " the blessin' o' God be upon us ! Is it here before me you are ? "

" Hould your tongue, man," said the other, with a smile of mysterious triumph. " Is it that you wondher at ? Ha, ha ! That's little of it ! "

" But how did you know my name ? or who I was ? or where I lived at all ? Heaven protect us ! it's beyant belief, clane out."

" Hould your tongue," replied the man ; " don't be

axin' me anything o' the kind. Clear out, both of yees, till I begin my *pisthrogues* wid the sick child. Clear out, I say."

With some degree of apprehension Larry and Sheelah left the house as they had been ordered, and the fairy man, having pulled out a flask of *poteen*, administered a dose of it to Phelim ; and never yet did patient receive his medicine with such a relish : he licked his lips, and fixed his eye upon it with a longing look.

" Begorra," said he, " that's fine stuff entirely. Will you lave me the bottle ? "

" No," said the fairy man ; " but I'll call an' give you a little of it wanst a day."

" Ay, do," replied Phelim ; " the divil a fear o' me if I get enough of it. I hope I'll see you often."

The fairy man kept his word ; so that what with his bottle, a hardy constitution, and light bedclothes, Phelim got the upper hand of his malady. In a month he was again on his legs ; but, alas ! his complexion, though not changed to deformity, was woefully out of joint. His principal blemish, in addition to the usual marks left by this complaint, consisted in a drooping of his left eyelid, which gave to his whole face a cast highly ludicrous.

When Phelim felt thoroughly recovered, he claimed a pair of " leather crackers," a hareskin cap, and a coat, with a pertinacity which kept the worthy couple in a state of inquietude until they complied with his importunity. Henceforth he began to have everything his own way. His parents, sufficiently thankful that he was spared to them, resolved to thwart him no more.

" It's well we have him at all," said his mother ; " sure, if we hadn't him, we'd be breakin' our hearts, and sayin'

if it ud plase God to send him back to us, that we'd be happy even wid givin' him his own way."

"They say it breaks their strinth, too," replied his father, "to be crubbin' them in too much, an' snappin' at thim for every hand's turn; an' I'm sure it does, too."

"Doesn't he become the pock-marks well, the crathur?" said the mother.

"Become!" said the father—"but doesn't the droop in his eye set him off all to pieces!"

"Ay," observed the mother; "an' how the crathur went round among all the neighbours to show them the 'leather crackers'! To see his little pride out o' the hareskin cap, too, wid the hare's ears stickin' out of his temples—that, an' the droopin' eye undher them, makes him look so cunnin' an' ginteel that one can't help havin' their heart fixed upon him."

"He'd look betther still if that ould coat wasn't sweepin' the ground behind him; an' what ud you think to put a pair o' *martyeens* on his legs to hide the mazles? He might go anywhere thin."

"Throth, he might. But, Larry, what in the world wide could be in the fairy man's bottle that Phelim took sich a likin' for it? He tould me this mornin' that he'd suffer to have the pock agin, set in case he was cured wid the same bottle."

"Well, the heaven be praised, anyhow, that we have a son for the half acre, Sheelah."

"Amin! An' let us take good care of him, now that he's spared to us."

Phelim's appetite after his recovery was anything but a joke to his father. He was now seldom at home, except during meal-times. Wherever fun or novelty was to be found, Phelim was present. He became a

regular attendant upon all the sportsmen. To such he made himself very useful by his correct knowledge of the best covers for game and the best pools for fish. He was acquainted with every rood of land in the parish ; knew with astonishing accuracy where coveys were to be sprung and hares started. No hunt was without him ; such was his wind and speed of foot that to follow a chase, and keep up with the horsemen, was to him only a matter of sport. When daylight passed, night presented him with amusements suitable to itself. No wake, for instance, could escape him ; a dance without young Phelim O'Toole would have been a thing worthy to be remembered. He was zealously devoted to cock-fighting ; on Shrove-Tuesday he shouted loudest among the crowd that attended the sport of throwing at cocks tied to a stake ; football and hurling never occurred without him ; bull-baiting, for it was common in his youth, was luxury to him ; and ere he reached fourteen every one knew Phelim O'Toole as an adept at card-playing. Wherever a sheep, a leg of mutton, a dozen of bread, or a bottle of whisky was put up in a shebeen-house, to be played for by the country gamblers at the five and ten, or spoiled five, Phelim always took a hand, and was generally successful. On these occasions he was frequently charged with an over-refined dexterity, but Phelim usually swore, in vindication of his own innocence, until he got black in the face, as the phrase among such characters goes.

The reader is to consider him now about fifteen, a stout, overgrown, unwashed cub. His parents' anxiety that he should grow strong prevented them from training him to any kind of employment. He was eternally going about in quest of diversion ; and wherever

a knot of idlers was to be found, there was Phelim. He had, up to this period, never wore a shoe, nor a single article of dress that had been made for himself, with the exception of one or two pair of sheepskin small-clothes. In this way he passed his time, bare-legged, without shoes, clothed in an old coat much too large for him, his neck open, and his sooty locks covered with the hareskin cap, the ears, as usual, sticking out above his brows. Much of his time was spent in setting the idle boys of the village to fight, and in carrying lying challenges from one to another. He himself was seldom without a broken head or a black eye ; for, in Ireland, he who is known to be fond of quarrelling, as the people say, usually "gets enough an' lavins of it." Larry and Sheelah, thinking it now high time that something should be done with Phelim, thought it necessary to give him some share of education. Phelim opposed this bitterly as an unjustifiable encroachment upon his personal liberty ; but by bribing him with the first and only suit of clothes he had yet got, they at length succeeded in prevailing on him to go.

The school to which he was sent happened to be kept in what is called an inside kiln. This kind of kiln is usually—but less so now than formerly—annexed to respectable farmers' outhouses, to which, in agricultural districts, it forms a very necessary appendage. It also serves at the same time as a barn, the kiln-pot being sunk in the shape of an inverted cone at one end, but divided from the barn-floor by a wall about three feet high. From this wall beams run across the kiln-pot, over which, in a transverse direction, are laid a number of rafters like the joists of a loft, but not fastened. These ribs are covered with straw, over which again is spread

a winnow cloth to keep the grain from being lost. The fire is sunk on a level with the bottom of the kiln-pot —that is, about eight or ten feet below the floor of the barn. The descent to it is by stairs formed at the side wall. We have been thus minute in describing it because, as the reader will presently perceive, the feats of Phelim render it necessary.

On the first day of his entering the school he presented himself with a black eye ; and as his character was well known to both master and scholars, the former felt no hesitation in giving him a wholesome lecture upon the subject of his future conduct. For at least a year before this time he had gained the nickname of " Blessed Phelim," and " Bouncing," epithets bestowed on him by an ironical allusion to his patron saint and his own habits.

" So, Blessed Phelim," said the master, " you are coming to school ! ! Well, well ! I only say that miracles will never cease. *Arrah*, Phelim, will you tell us candidly—ah—I beg your pardon—I mean, will you tell us the best lie you can coin upon the cause of your coming to imbibe moral and literary knowledge ? Silence, boys, till we hear Blessed Phelim's lie."

" You must hear it, masther," said Phelim. " I'm comin' to larn to read an' write."

" Bravo ! By the bones of Prosodius, I expected a lie, but not such a thumper as that. And you're comin' wid a black eye to prove it ! A black eye, Phelim, is the blackguard's coat-of-arms ; and to do you justice, you are seldom widout your crest."

For a few days Phelim attended the school, but learned not a letter. The master usually sent him to be taught by the youngest lads, with the hope of being able to excite

a proper spirit of pride and emulation in a mind that required some extraordinary impulse. One day he called him up to ascertain what progress he had actually made ; the unsuspecting teacher sat at the time upon the wall which separated the barn-floor from the kiln-pot, with his legs dangling at some distance from the ground. It was summer, and the rafters used in drying the grain had been removed. On finding that Blessed Phelim, notwithstanding all the lessons he had received, was still in a state of the purest ignorance, he lost his temper, and brought him over between his knees, that he might give him an occasional cuff for his idleness. The lesson went on, and the master's thumps were thickening about Phelim's ears, much to the worthy youth's displeasure.

" Phelim," said the master, " I'll invert you as a scare-crow for dunces. I'll lay you against the wall, with your head down and your heels up, like a forked carrot."

" But how will you manage that ? " said Phelim. " What ud I be doin' in the manetime ? "

" I'll find a way to manage it," said the master.

" To put my head down an' my heels up, is id ? " inquired Phelim.

" You've said it, my worthy," returned his teacher.

" If you don't know the way," replied the pupil, " I'll show you," getting his shoulder under the master's leg, and pitching him heels over head into the kiln-pot. He instantly seized his cap. and ran out of the school, highly delighted at his feat, leaving the scholars to render the master whatever assistance was necessary. The poor man was not dangerously hurt ; but, in addition to a broken arm, he received half-a-dozen severe contusions on the head and in different parts of the body.

This closed Phelim's education; for no persuasion could ever induce him to enter a school afterwards; nor could any temptation prevail on the neighbouring teachers to admit him as a pupil.

Phelim now shot up rapidly to the stature of a young man; and a graceful slip was he. From the period of fifteen until nineteen he was industriously employed in idleness. About sixteen he began to look after the girls, and to carry a cudgel. The father in vain attempted to inoculate him with a love of labour; but Phelim would not receive the infection. His life was a pleasanter one. Sometimes, indeed, when he wanted money to treat the girls at fairs and markets, he would prevail on himself to labour a week or fortnight with some neighbouring farmer; but the moment he had earned as much as he deemed sufficient, the spade was thrown aside. Phelim knew all the fiddlers and pipers in the barony; was master of the ceremonies at every wake and dance that occurred within several miles of him. He was a crack dancer, and never attended a dance without performing a hornpipe on a door or a table. No man could shuffle, or treble, or cut, or spring, or caper with him. Indeed, it was said that he could dance "Moll Roe" upon the end of a five-gallon keg, and snuff a mould candle with his heels, yet never lose the time. The father and mother were exceedingly proud of Phelim. The former, when he found him grown up, and associating with young men, began to feel a kind of ambition in being permitted to join Phelim and his companions, and to look upon the society of his own son as a privilege. With the girls Phelim was a beauty without paint. They thought every wake truly a scene of sorrow if he did not happen to be present. Every dance was doleful without

him. Phelim wore his hat on one side, with a knowing but careless air; he carried his cudgel with a good-humoured, dashing spirit, precisely in accordance with the character of a man who did not care a *traneen* whether he drank with you as a friend, or fought with you as a foe. Never were such songs heard as Phelim could sing, nor such a voice as that with which he sang them. His attitudes and action were inimitable. The droop in his eye was a standing wink at the girls; and, when he sang his funny songs, with what practised ease he gave the darlings a roguish chuck under the chin! Then his jokes! "Why, faix," as the fair ones often said of him, "before Phelim speaks at all, one laughs at what he says." This was fact. His very appearance at a wake, dance, or drinking match was hailed by a peal of mirth. This heightened his humour exceedingly; for, say what you will, laughter is to wit what air is to fire—the one dies without the other.

Let no one talk of beauty being on the surface. This is a popular error, and no one but a superficial fellow would defend it. Among ten thousand you could not get a more unfavourable surface than Phelim's. His face resembled the rough side of a colander, or, as he was often told in raillery, "you might grate potatoes on it." The lid of his right eye, as the reader knows, was like the lid of a salt-box, always closed; and when he risked a wink with the left, it certainly gave him the look of a man shutting out the world and retiring into himself for the purpose of self-examination. No, no; beauty is in the mind, in the soul; otherwise Phelim never could have been such a prodigy of comeliness among the girls. This was the distinction the fair sex drew in his favour. "Phelim," they would say, "is not purty, but he's very

comely." "Bad end to the one of him but would stale a pig off a tether wid his winnin' ways." And so he would, too, without much hesitation, for it was not the first time he had stolen his father's.

From nineteen until the close of his minority, Phelim became a distinguished man in fairs and markets. He was, in fact, the hero of the parish; but, unfortunately, he seldom knew on the morning of the fair day the name of the party or faction on whose side he was to fight. This was merely a matter of priority, for whoever happened to give him the first treat uniformly secured him. The reason of this pliability on his part was that Phelim, being every person's friend by his good nature, was nobody's foe except for the day. He fought for fun and whisky. When he happened to drub some companion or acquaintance on the opposite side, he was ever ready to express his regret at the circumstance, and abused them heartily for not having treated him first.

Phelim was also a great Ribbonman; and from the time he became initiated into the system, his eyes were wonderfully opened to the oppressions of the country. Sessions, decrees, and warrants he looked upon as gross abuses; assizes, too, by which so many of his friends were put to some inconvenience, he considered, as the result of Protestant ascendancy, cancers that ought to be cut out of the constitution. Bailiffs, drivers, tithe-proctors, tax-gatherers, policemen, and parsons, he thought were vermin that ought to be compelled to emigrate to a much warmer country than Ireland.

There was no such hand in the country as Phelim at an *alibi*. Just give him the outline—a few leading particulars of the fact—and he would work wonders. One

would think, indeed, that he had been born for that especial purpose; for, as he was never known to utter a syllable of truth but once, when he had a design in not being believed, so there was no risk of a lawyer getting truth out of him. No man was ever afflicted with such convenient maladies as Phelim; even his sprains, toothaches, and colics seemed to have entered into the Whiteboy system. But, indeed, the very diseases in Ireland are seditious. Many a time has the toothache come in to aid Paddy in obstructing the course of justice, and a colic been guilty of misprison of treason. Irish deaths, too, are very disloyal, and frequently at variance with the laws. Nor are our births much better; for, although more legitimate than those of our English neighbours, yet they are in general more illegal. Phelim, in proving his *alibis*, proved all these positions. On one occasion "he slep' at the prisoner's house, and couldn't close his eye with a thief of a toothache that persecuted him the whole night"; so that, in consequence of having the toothache, it was impossible that the prisoner could leave the house without his knowledge.

Again, the prisoner at the bar could not possibly have shot the deceased, "bekase Mickey slep' that very night at Phelim's, an' Phelim, being ill o' the colic, never slep' at all durin' the whole night; an', by the vartue of his oath, the poor boy couldn't go out o' the house unknownst to him. If he had, Phelim would a seen him, sure."

Again, "Paddy Cummisky's wife tuk ill of a young one, an' Phelim was sent for to bring the midwife; but afore he kem to Paddy's or hard o' the thing at all, the prisoner, arly in the night, comin' to sit a while wid Paddy, went for the midwife instead o' Phelim, an' thin

they sot up an' had a sup in regard of the 'casion, an' the prisoner never left them at all that night until the next mornin'. An' by the same a-token, he remimbered Paddy Cummisky barrin' the door, an' shuttin' the windies, bekase it's not lucky to have them open, for 'fraid that the fairies ud throw their *pishthrogues* upon the young one, an' it not christened."

Phelim was certainly an accomplished youth. As an alibist, however, his career was, like that of all alibists, a short one. The fact was, that his face soon became familiar to the court and the lawyers, so that his name and appearance were ultimately rather hazardous to the cause of his friends.

Phelim, on other occasions, when summoned as evidence against his well-wishers or brother Ribbonmen, usually forgot his English, and gave his testimony by an interpreter. Nothing could equal his ignorance and want of common capacity during these trials. His face was as free from every visible trace of meaning as if he had been born an idiot. No block was ever more impenetrable than he.

"What is the noble gintleman sayin'?" he would ask in Irish; and on having that explained, he would inquire, "What is that?" then demand a fresh explanation of the last one, and so on successively, until he was given up in despair.

Sometimes, in cases of a capital nature, Phelim, with the consent of his friends, would come forward and make disclosures, in order to have them put upon their trial and acquitted, lest an approver, or some one earnestly disposed to prosecute, might appear against them. Now the *alibi* and its usual accompaniments are all of old standing in Ireland; but the master-stroke

to which we have alluded is a modern invention. Phelim would bear evidence against them; and whilst the Government—for it was mostly in Government prosecutions he adventured this—believed they had ample grounds for conviction in his disclosures, it little suspected that the whole matter was a plan to defeat itself. In accordance with his design, he gave such evidence upon the table as rendered conviction hopeless. His great object was to damn his own character as a witness, and to make such blunders, premeditated slips, and admissions, as just left him within an inch of a prosecution for perjury. Having succeeded in acquitting his friends, he was content to withdraw amid a volley of pretended execrations, leaving the attorney-general, with all his legal knowledge, outwitted and foiled.

All Phelim's accomplishments, however, were nothing when compared to his gallantry. With personal disadvantages which would condemn any other man to old bachelorship, he was nevertheless the white-headed boy among the girls. He himself was conscious of this, and made his attacks upon their hearts indiscriminately. If he met an unmarried female only for five minutes, be she old or ugly, young or handsome, he devoted at least four minutes and three-quarters to the tender passion—made love to her with an earnestness that would deceive a saint, backed all his protestations with a superfluity of round oaths, and drew such a picture of her beauty as might suit the houries of Mahomet's paradise.

Phelim and his father were great associates. No two agreed better. They went to fairs and markets together, got drunk together, and returned home with their arms about each other's neck in the most loving and

affectionate manner, Larry, if Phelim were too modest to speak for himself, seldom met a young girl without laying siege to her for the son. He decanted upon his good qualities, glossed over his defects, and drew deeply upon invention in his behalf. Sheelah, on the other hand, was an eloquent advocate for him. She had her eye upon half-a-dozen of the village girls, to every one of whom she found something to say in Phelim's favour.

But it is time the action of our story should commence. When Phelim had reached his twenty-fifth year the father thought it was high time for him to marry. The good man had, of course, his own motives for this. In the first place, Phelim, with all his gallantry and cleverness, had never contributed a shilling either towards his own support or that of the family. In the second place, he was never likely to do so. In the third place, the father found him a bad companion; for, in good truth, he had corrupted the good man's morals so evidently that his character was now little better than that of his son. In the fourth place, he never thought of Phelim that he did not see a gallows in the distance; and matrimony, he thought, might save him from hanging, as one poison neutralises another. In the fifth place, the half acre was but a shabby patch to meet the exigencies of the family since Phelim grew up. "Bouncing Phelim," as he was called for more reasons than one, had the gift of good digestion along with his other accomplishments, and with such energy was it exercised that the "half acre" was frequently in hazard of leaving the family altogether. The father, therefore, felt quite willing, if Phelim married, to leave him the inheritance, and seek a new settlement for himself. Or, if Phelim preferred leaving him, he agreed to give

him one-half of it, together with an equal division of all his earthly goods : to wit—two goats, of which Phelim was to get one ; six hens and a cock, of which Phelim was to get three hens and a chance of a toss-up for the cock ; four stools, of which Phelim was to get two ; two pots—a large one and a small one—the former to go with Phelim ; three horn spoons, of which Phelim was to get one and the chance of a toss-up for the third. Phelim was to bring his own bed, provided he did not prefer getting a bottle of fresh straw as a connubial luxury. The blanket was a tender subject ; for, having been fourteen years in employment, it entangled the father and Phelim touching the prudence of the latter claiming it all. The son was at length compelled to give it up, at least in the character of an appendage to his marriage property. He feared that the wife, should he not be able to replace it by a new one, or should she herself not be able to bring him one as part of her dowry, would find the honeymoon rather lively. Phelim's bedstead admitted of no dispute, the floor of the cabin having served him in that capacity ever since he began to sleep in a separate bed. His pillow was his small-clothes, and his quilt his own coat, under which he slept snugly enough.

The father having proposed, and the son acceded to, these arrangements, the next thing to be done was to pitch upon a proper girl as his wife. This, being a more important matter, was thus discussed by the father and son one evening at their own fireside, in the presence of Sheelah.

" Now, Phelim," said the father, " look about you, an' tell us what girl in the neighbourhood you'd like to be married to."

"Why," replied Phelim, "I'll lave that to you; jist point out the girl you'd like for your daughter-in-law, an' be she rich, poor, ould, or ugly, I'll delude her. That's the chat."

"Ah, Phelim, if you could put your *comedher* an Gracey Dalton, you'd be a made boy. She has the full of a rabbit-skin o' guineas."

"A made boy! Faith, they say I'm that as it is, you know. But would you wish me to put my *comedher* on Gracey Dalton? Spake out."

To be sure I would."

"Ay," observed the mother; "or what ud you think of Miss Pattherson? That ud be the girl. She has a fine farm and five hundher pounds. She's a Protestant, but Phelim could make a Christian of her."

"To be sure I could," said Phelim, "have her thumpin' her breast and countin' her *Padareens* in no time. Would you wish me to have her, mudher?"

"Throth, an' I would, *avick*."

"That ud never do," observed the father. "Sure, you don't think she'd ever think of the likes o' Phelim?"

"Don't make a goose of yourself, ould man," observed Phelim. "Do you think, if I set about it, that I'd not manufacture her senses as asy as I'd peel a piatee."

"Well, well," replied the father, "in the name o' goodness make up to her. Faith, it ud be something to have a jauntin'-car in the family."

"Ay, but what the sorra will I do for a suit o' clothes," observed Phelim. "I could never go near her in these breeches. My elbows, too, are out o' this ould coat, bad luck to it! An' as for a waistcoat, why, I dunna but it's a sin to call what I'm wearin' a waistcoat at all. Thin agin—why, blood alive, sure I can't go to her

barefooted ; an' I dunna but it ud be dacenter to do that same than to step out in sich excuses for brogues as these. An', in regard o' the stockins, why, I've pulled them down, sthrivin' to look dacent, till one ud think the balls o' my legs is at my heels."

"The sorra word's in that but thruth, anyhow," observed the father; "but what's to be done?—for we have no way of gettin' them."

"Faith, I don't know that," said Phelim. "What if we'd borry ? I could get the loan of a pair of breeches from Dudley Dwire, an' a coat from Sam Appleton. We might thry Billy Brady for a waistcoat an' a pair o' stockins. Barney Buckram-back, the pinsioner, ud lend me his pumps ; an' we want nothing now but a hat."

"Nothin' undher a Caroline ud do, goin' there," observed the father.

"I think Father Carroll ud oblage me wid the loan o' one for a day or two," said Phelim ; "he has two or three o' them, all as good as ever."

"But, Phelim," said the father, "before we go to all this trouble, are you sure you could put your *comedher* on Miss Pattherson ? "

"None o' your nonsense," said Phelim ; "don't you know I could ? I hate a man to be puttin' questions to me when he knows them himself. It's a fashion you have got, an' you ought to dhrop it."

"Well, thin," said the father, "let us set about it to-morrow. If we can borry the clo'es, thry your luck."

Phelim and the father, the next morning, set out, each in a different direction, to see how far they could succeed on the borrowing system. The father was to

make a descent on Dudley Dwire for the breeches, and appeal to the generosity of Sam Appleton for the coat. Phelim himself was to lay his case before the priest, and to assail Buckram-back, the pensioner, on his way home for the brogues.

When Phelim arrived at the priest's house, he found none of the family up but the housekeeper. After bidding her good-morrow, and being desired to sit down, he entered into conversation with the good woman, who felt anxious to know the scandal of the whole parish.

"Aren't you a son of Larry Toole's, young man?"

"I am, indeed, Mrs. Doran. I'm Phelim O'Toole, my mother says."

"I hope you're comin' to spake to the priest about your duty?"

"Why, then, begorra, I'm glad you axed me, so I am—for only you seen the pinance in my face, you'd never suppose sich a thing. I want to make my confishion to him, wid the help o' goodness."

"Is there any news goin', Phelim?"

"Divil a much, barrin' what you hard yourself, I suppose, about Frank Fogarty, that went mad yesterday, for risin' the meal on the poor, an' ate the ears off himself afore anybody could see him."

"*Vick na hoia*, Phelim; do you tell me so?"

"Why, man o' Moses! is it possible you did not hear it, ma'am?"

"Oh, *wurrah*, man alive, not a syllable! Ate the ears off of himself! Phelim, *acushla*, see what it is to be hard an the poor!"

"Oh, he was ever an' always the biggest nager livin', ma'am. Ay, an' when he was tied up till a blessed

priest ud be brought to *malivogue* the divil out of him, he got a scythe an' cut his own two hands off."

"No, thin, Phelim."

"Faitha, ma'am, sure enough. I suppose, ma'am, you hard about Biddy Duignan?"

"Who is she, Phelim?"

"Why, the misfortunate crathur's a daughter of her father's, ould Mick Duignan, of Tavenimore."

"An' what about her, Phelim? What happened her?"

"Faix, ma'am, a bit of a mistake she met wid; but, anyhow, ould Harry Connolly's to stand in the chapel nine Sundays, an' to make three stations to Lough Derg for it. Bedad, they say it's as purty a crathur as you'd see in a day's thravellin'."

"Harry Connolly! Why, I know Harry, but I never heard of Biddy Duignan or her father at all. Harry Connolly! Is it a man that's bent over his staff for the last twenty years? Hut, tut, Phelim, don't say sich a thing!"

"Why, ma'am, sure, he takes wid it himself; he doesn't deny it at all, the ould sinner."

"Oh, that I mayn't sin, Phelim, if one knows who to thrust in this world, so they don't. Why, the desateful ould——Hut, Phelim, I can't give in to it."

"Faix, ma'am, no wondher; but sure, when he confesses it himself! Bedad, Mrs. Doran, I never seen you look so well. Upon my sowl, you'd take the shine out o' the youngest o' thim!"

"Is it me, Phelim? Why, you're beside yourself."

"Beside myself, am I? Faith, an' if I am, what I said's thruth, anyhow. I'd give more nor I'll name

to have so red a pair of cheeks as you have. Sowl, they're thumpers."

"Ha, ha, ha! Oh, that I mayn't sin, but that's a good joke! An ould woman, near sixty!"

"Now, Mrs. Doran, that's nonsense, an' nothin' else. Near sixty? Oh, by my purty, that's runnin' away wid the story entirely! No, nor thirty. Faith, I know them that's not more nor five or six an' twenty, that ud be glad to borry the loan of your face for a while. Divil a word o' lie in that."

"No, no, Phelim, *aroon;* I seen the day; but that's past. I remimber when the people did say I was worth lookin' at. Won't you sit near the fire? You're in the dhraft there."

"Thank you kindly, ma'am. Faith, you have the name, far an' near, for bein' the civillist woman alive this day. But, upon my sowl, if you wor ten times as civil, an' say that you're not aquil to any young girl in the parish, I'd dispute it wid you, an' say it was nothin' else than a bounce."

"*Arrah*, Phelim, darlin', how can you palaver me that way? I hope your dacent father's well, Phelim, an' your honest mother?"

"Divil a fear o' them. Now, I'd hould nine to one that the purtiest o' them hasn't a sweeter mout' than you have. By dad you have—by dad you have a pair o' lips, God bless them, that—well, well——

Phelim here ogled her with looks particularly wistful

"Phelim, you're losin' the little senses you have."

"Faix, an' it's you that's taken them out o' me, then. A purty woman always makes a fool o' me. Divil a

word o' lie in it. Faix, Mrs. Doran, ma'am, you have a chin o' your own! Well, well! Oh, begorra, I wish I hadn't come out this mornin', anyhow!"

"*Arrah*, why, Phelim? In throth it's you that's the quare Phelim!"

"Why, ma'am? Oh, bedad, it's a folly to talk. I can't go widout tastin' them. Sich a pair o' timptations as your lips, barrin' your eyes, I didn't see this many a day."

"Tastin' what, you mad crathur?"

"Why, I'll show you what I'd like to be afther tastin'. Oh, bedad, I'll have no refusin'; a purty woman always makes a foo——"

"Keep away, Phelim—keep off—bad end to you. What do you mane? Don't you see Fool Art lyin' in the corner there undher the sacks? I don't think he's asleep."

"Fool Art! why, the misfortunate idiot, what about him? Sure, he hasn't sinse to know the right hand from the left. Bedad, ma'am, the thruth is that a purty woman always makes a——"

"Throth an' you won't," said she, struggling.

"Throth an' I will, thin, taste the same lips, or we'll see who's strongest!"

A good-humoured struggle took place between the housekeeper and Phelim, who found her, in point of personal strength, very near a match for him. She laughed heartily, but Phelim attempted to salute her with a face of mock gravity as nearly resembling that of a serious man as he could assume. In the meantime, chairs were overturned and wooden dishes trundled about; a crash was heard here, and another there. Phelim drove her to the hob, and from the hob they bounced

into the fire, the embers and ashes of which were kicked up into a cloud about them.

"Phelim, spare your strinth," said the funny housekeeper; "it won't do. Be asy, now, or I'll get angry. The priest, too, will hear the noise, and so will Fool Art."

"To the divil wid Fool Art, an' the priest, too," said Phelim; "who cares a buckey* about the priest whin a purty woman like you is consarn——"

"What's this?" said the priest, stepping down from the parlour—"what's the matter? Oh, oh, upon my word, Mrs. Doran! Very good, indeed! Under my own roof, too! An' pray, ma'am, who is the gallant? Turn round, young man. Yes, I see! Why, better and better! Bouncing Phelim O'Toole, that never spoke truth! I think, Mr. O'Toole, that when you come a-courting, you ought to consider it worth while to appear somewhat more smooth in your habiliments. I simply venture to give that as my opinion."

"Why, sure enough," replied Phelim, without a moment's hesitation, "your reverence has found us out."

"Found you out! Why, is that the tone you speak in?"

"Faith, sir, thruth's best. I wanted her to tell it to you long ago, but she wouldn't. Howsomever, it's still time enough. Hem!—the thruth, sir, is that Mrs. Doran an' I is goin' to get the words said as soon as we can; so, sir, wid the help o' goodness, I came to see if your reverence ud call us next Sunday wid a blessin'."

Mrs. Doran had for at least a dozen round years before this been in a state of hopelessness upon the subject of matrimony—nothing in the shape of a proposal

* A small marble.

having in the course of that period come in her way. Now we have Addison's authority for affirming that an old woman who permits the thoughts of love to get into her head becomes a very odd kind of animal. Mrs. Doran, to do her justice, had not thought of it for nearly three lustres ; for this reason, that she had so far overcome her vanity as to deem it impossible that a proposal could be ever made to her. It is difficult, however, to know what a day may bring forth. Here was an offer dropping like a ripe plum into her mouth. She turned the matter over in her mind with a quickness equal to that of Phelim himself. One leading thought struck her forcibly : if she refused to close with this offer, she would never get another.

" Is it come to this, Mrs. Doran ? " inquired the priest.

" Oh, bedad, sir, she knows it is," replied Phelim, giving her a wink with the safe eye.

Now Mrs. Doran began to have her suspicions. The wink she considered as decidedly ominous. Phelim, she concluded, with all the sagacity of a woman thinking upon that subject, had winked at her to assent only for the purpose of getting themselves out of the scrape for the present. She feared that Phelim would be apt to break off the match, and take some opportunity, before Sunday should arrive, of preventing the priest from calling them. Her decision, however, was soon made. She resolved, if possible, to pin down Phelim to his own proposal.

" Is this true, Mrs. Doran ? " inquired the priest a second time.

Mrs. Doran could not, with any regard to the delicacy of her sex, give an assent without proper emotion. She

accordingly applied her gown-tail to her eyes, and shed a few natural tears in reply to the affecting query of the pastor.

Phelim, in the meantime, began to feel mystified. Whether Mrs. Doran's tears were a proof that she was disposed to take the matter seriously, or whether they were tears of shame and vexation for having been caught in the character of a romping old hoyden, he could not then exactly decide. He had, however, awful misgivings upon the subject.

"Then," said the priest, "it is to be understood that I'm to call you both on Sunday?"

"There's no use in keepin' it back from you," replied Mrs. Doran. "I know it's foolish of me; but we have all our failins, and to be fond of Phelim, there, is mine. Your reverence *is* to call us next Sunday, as Phelim tould you. I am sure I can't tell you how he deluded me at all, the desaver o' the world!"

Phelim's face during this acknowledgment was, like Goldsmith's Haunch of Venison, "a subject for painters to study." His eyes projected like a hare's, until nothing could be seen but the balls. Even the drooping lid raised itself up, as if it were never to droop again.

"Well," said the priest, "I shall certainly not use a single argument to prevent you. Your choice, I must say, does you credit, particularly when it is remembered that you have come at least to years of discretion. Indeed, many persons might affirm that you have gone beyond them; but I say nothing. In the meantime, your wishes must be complied with. I will certainly call Phelim O'Toole and Bridget Doran on Sunday next; and one thing I know, that we shall have a very merry congregation."

Phelim's eyes turned upon the priest and the old woman alternately with an air of bewilderment which, had the priest been a man of much observation, might have attracted his attention.

"Oh, murdher alive, Mrs. Doran," said Phelim, "how am I to do for clothes? Faith, I'd like to appear dacent in the thing, anyhow."

"True," said the priest. "Have you made no provision for smoothing the externals of your admirer? Is he to appear in this trim?"

"Bedad, sir," said Phelim, "we never thought o' that. All the world knows, your reverence, that I might carry my purse in my eye an' never feel a mote in it. But the thruth is, sir, she was so lively on the subject—in a kind of pleasant, coaxin' hurry of her own—an' indeed I was so myself, too. Augh, Mrs. Doran! Begorra, sir, she put her *comedher* an me entirely, so she did. Well, be my sowl, I'll be the flower of a husband to her, anyhow. I hope your reverence 'ill come to the christ'nin? But about the clo'es?—bad luck saize the tack I have to put to my back but what you see an me, if we were to be married to-morrow."

"Well, Phelim, *aroon*," said Mrs. Doran, "his reverence here has my little pences o' money in his hands, an' the best way is for you to get the price of a suit from him. You must get clo'es, an' good ones, too, Phelim, sooner nor any stop should be put to our marriage."

"Augh, Mrs. Doran," said Phelim, ogling her from the safe eye with a tender suavity of manner that did honour to his heart; "begorra, ma'am, you've played the puck entirely wid me. Faith, I'm getting fonder an' fonder of her every minute, your reverence."

He set his eye, as he uttered this, so sweetly and significantly upon the old housekeeper that the priest thought it a transgression of decorum in his presence.

" I think," said he, " you had better keep your melting looks to yourself, Phelim. Restrain your gallantry, if you please, at least until I withdraw."

" Why, blood alive ! sir, when people's fond of one another it's hard to keep the love down. Augh, Mrs. Doran !—faith, you've rendhered my heart like a lump o' tallow."

" Follow me to the parlour," said the priest, " and let me know, Bridget, what sum I am to give this melting gallant of yours."

" I may as well get what'll do the weddin' at wanst," observed Phelim. " It'll save throuble, in the first place; an' sackinly, it'll save time ; for, plase goodness, I'll have everything ready for houldin' the weddin' the Monday afther the last call. By the hole o' my coat, the minute I get the clo'es we'll be spliced, an' then for the honeymoon ! "

" How much money shall I give him ? " said the priest.

" Indeed, sir, I think you ought to know that ; I'm ignorant of what ud make a dacent weddin'. We don't intend to get married undher a hedge ; we've frinds on both sides, an', of coorse, we must have them about us, plase goodness."

" Begorra, sir, it's no wondher I'm fond of her, the darlin' ! Bad win to you, Mrs. Doran, how did you come over me at all ? "

" Bridget," said the priest, " I have asked you a simple question, to which I expect a plain answer. What money am I to give this tallow-hearted swain of yours ? "

"Why, your reverence, whatsomever you think may be enough for full, an' plinty, an' dacency at the weddin'."

"Not forgettin' the thatch for me, in the manetime," said Phelim. "Nothin' less will sarve us, plase your reverence. Maybe, sir, you'd think of comin' to the weddin' yourself?"

"There are in my hands," observed the priest, "one hundred and twenty-two guineas of your money, Bridget. Here, Phelim, are ten for your wedding suit and wedding expenses. Go to your wedding? No! don't suppose for a moment that I countenance this transaction in the slightest degree. I comply with your wishes, but I heartily despise you both—but certainly this foolish old woman most. Give me an acknowledgment for this, Phelim."

"God bless you, sir!" said Phelim, as if he had paid them a compliment. "In regard o' the acknowledgment, sir, I acknowledge it wid all my heart; but bad luck to the scrape at all I can write."

"Well, no matter. You admit, Bridget, that I give this money to this blessed youth by your authority and consent."

"Surely, your reverence; I'll never go back of it."

"Now, Phelim," said the priest, "you have the money; pray get married as soon as possible."

"I'll give you my oath," said Phelim; "an' be the blessed iron tongs in the grate there, I'll not lose a day in getting myself spliced. Isn't she the tendher-hearted sowl, your reverence? Augh, Mrs. Doran!"

"Leave my place," said the priest. "I cannot forget the old proverb, that one fool makes many, but an old fool is worse than any. So it is with this old woman."

"Ould woman! Oh, thin, I'm sure I don't desarve this from your reverence!" exclaimed the housekeeper, wiping her eyes. "If I'm a little seasoned now, you know I wasn't always so. If ever there was a faithful sarvant, I was that, and managed your house and place as honestly as I'll manage my own, plase goodness."

As they left the parlour Phelim became the consoler.

"Whisht, you darlin'!" he exclaimed. "Sure, you'll have Bouncin' Phelim to comfort you. But now that he has shut the door, what—hem—I'd take it as a piece o' civility if you'd open my eyes a little; I mane—hem—was it—is this doin' him—or how? Are you—hem—do you undherstand me, Mrs. Doran?"

"What is it you want to know, Phelim? I think everything is very plain."

"Oh, the divil a plainer, I suppose. But, in the manetime, might one ax, out o' mere curiosity, if you're in arnest?"

"In arnest! *Arrah*, what did I give you my money for, Phelim? Well, now that everything is settled, God forgive you if you make a bad husband to me."

"A bad what?"

"I say, God forgive you if you make a bad husband to me. I'm afeard, Phelim, that I'll be too foolish about you—that I'll be too fond of you."

Phelim looked at her in solemn silence, and then replied: "Let us trust in God that you may be enabled to overcome the weakness. Pray to Him to avoid all folly, an', above everything, to give you a dacent stock of discration, for it's a mighty fine thing for a woman of your yea——hem, a mighty fine thing it is, indeed, for a sasoned woman, as you say you are."

"When will the weddin' take place, Phelim?"

"The what?" said Phelim, opening his brisk eye with a fresh stare of dismay.

"Why, the weddin', *acushla*. When will it take place? I think the Monday afther the last call ud be the best time. We wouldn't lose a day thin. Throth, I long to hear my last call over, Phelim, jewel."

Phelim gave her another look.

"The last call! Thin, by the vestment, you don't long half as much for your last call as I do."

"*Arrah*, Phelim, did you take the—the—what you wor wantin' a while agone? Throth, myself dis-remimbers."

"Ay, a round dozen o' them. How can you forget it?"

The idiot in the corner here gave a loud snore, but composed himself to sleep, as if insensible to all that passed.

"Throth, an' I do forget it. Now, Phelim, you'll not go till you take a cup o' tay wid myself. Throth, I do forget it, Phelim, darlin', jewel."

Phelim's face now assumed a very queer expression. He twisted his features into all possible directions; brought his mouth first round to one ear and then to the other; put his hand, as if in great pain, on the pit of his stomach; lifted one knee up till it almost touched his chin, then let it down, and instantly brought up the other in a similar manner.

"Phelim, darlin', what ails you?" inquired the tender old nymph. "*Wurrah*, man alive, aren't you well?"

"Oh, be the vestment," said Phelim, "what's this at all! Murdher *sheery*, what'll I do! Oh, I'm very bad! At death's door, so I am! Begorra, Mrs. Doran, I must be off!"

"*Wurrah*, Phelim, dear, won't you stop till we settle everything?"

"Oh, purshuin' to the hap'orth I can settle till I recover o' this murdherin' colic! All's asthray wid me in the inside. I'll see you—I'll see you—*Hanim un diouol!* what's this—I must be off like a shot—oh, murdher *sheery!*—but—but—I'll see you to-morrow. In the manetime, I'm—I'm for ever oblaged to you for—for—lendin' me the—loan of—oh, by the vestments, I'm a gone man!—for lendin' me the loan of the ten guineas—Oh, I'm gone!"

Phelim disappeared on uttering these words, and his strides, on passing out of the house, were certainly more rapid and vigorous than those of a man labouring under pain. In fact, he never looked behind him until one-half the distance between the priest's house and his father's cabin had been fairly traversed.

Some misgivings occurred to the old housekeeper, but her vanity, having been revived by Phelim's blarney, would not permit her to listen to them. She had, besides, other motives to fortify her faith in his attachment. First, there was her money, a much larger sum than ever Phelim could expect with any other woman, young or old; again, they were to be called on the following Sunday, and she knew that when a marriage affair proceeds so far, obstruction or disappointment is not to be apprehended.

When Phelim reached home he found the father returned after having borrowed a full suit of clothes for him. Sam Appleton, on hearing from Larry that Bouncing Phelim was about to get a "great match," generously lent him coat, waistcoat, hat and small-clothes.

When Phelim presented himself at home he scarcely replied to the queries put to him by his father and mother concerning his interview with the priest. He sat down, rubbed his hands, scratched his head, rose up, and walked to and fro, in a mood of mind so evidently between mirth and chagrin that his worthy parents knew not whether to be merry or miserable.

"Phelim," said the mother, "did you take anything while you wor away?"

"Did I take anything, is it? *Arrah*, be asy, old woman! Did I take anything? Faith, you may say that!"

"Let us know, anyhow, what's the matther wid you?" asked the father.

"Tare-an'-ounze!" exclaimed the son, "what is this for, at all, at all? It's too killin' I am, so it is."

"You're not lookin' at Sam Appleton's clo'es," said the father, "that he lent you the loan of, hat an' all."

"Do you want to put an affront upon me, ould man? To the divil wid himself an' his clo'es! When I want clo'es I'll buy them wid my own money!"

"Larry," observed the mother, "there's yourself all over—as proud as a paycock when the sup's in his head, an' ud spake as big widout the sign o' money in your pocket as if you had the rint of an estate."

"What do you say about the sign o' money?" exclaimed Phelim, with a swagger. "Maybe you'll call that the sign o' money!" he added, producing the ten guineas in gold.

The father and mother looked at it for a considerable time, then at each other, and shook their heads.

"Phelim!" said the father, solemnly.

"Phelim!" said the mother, awfully; and both shook their heads again.

"You wor never over-scrupulous," the father proceeded, "an' you know you have many little things to answer for, in the way of picking up what didn't belong to yourself. I think, too, you're not the same you wor afore you tuck to swearin' the *alibis*."

"Faith an' I doubt I'll have to get some one to swear an *alibi* for myself soon," Phelim replied.

"Why, blessed hour!" said Larry, "didn't I often tell you never to join the boys in anything that might turn out a hangin' matther?"

"If this is not a hangin' matther," said Phelim, "it's something nearly as bad—it's a marryin' matther. Sure, I deluded another since you seen me last. Divil a word o' lie in it. I was clane fell in love wid this mornin' about seven o'clock."

"But how did you get the money, Phelim?"

"Why, from the youthful sprig that fell in love wid me. Sure, we're to be 'called' in the chapel on Sunday next."

"Why, thin, now, Phelim! An' who is the young crathur? for in throth she must be young to go to give the money beforehand!"

"Murdher!" exclaimed Phelim, "what's this for? Hell purshue her, the ould rat-thrap! Was ever any one done as I am! Who is she? Why she's—oh, murdher, oh!—she's no other than—hem!—divil a one else than Father O'Hara's housekeeper, ould Biddy Doran!"

The mirth of the old couple was excessive. The father laughed till he fell off his stool, and the mother till the tears ran down her cheeks.

"Death alive, ould man! but you're very merry," said Phelim. "If you wor my age, an' in such an amplush, you'd laugh on the wrong side o' your mouth. Maybe you'll turn your tune when you hear that she has a hundher an' twenty guineas."

"An' you'll be rich, too," said the father. "The sprig an' you will be rich!—ha, ha, ha!"

"An' the family they'll have!" said the mother, in convulsions.

"Why, in regard o' that," said Phelim, rather nettled, "sure, we can do as my father an' you did: we can kiss the Lucky Stone, an' make a station."

"Phelim, *aroon*," said the mother, seriously, "put it out o' your head. Sure, you wouldn't go to bring me a daughter-in-law oulder nor myself?"

"I'd as soon go over," * said Phelim, "or swing itself, before I'd marry sich a piece o' desate. Hard feedin' to her! how she did me to my face!"

Phelim then entered into a long-visaged detail of the scene at Father O'Hara's, dwelling bitterly on the alacrity with which the old housekeeper ensnared him in his own mesh.

"However," he concluded, "she'd be a sharp one if she'd do me altogether. We're not marrid yet; an' I've a consate o' my own that she's done for the ten guineas, anyhow!"

A family counsel was immediately held upon Phelim's matrimonial prospects. On coming close to the speculation of Miss Patterson, it was somehow voted, notwithstanding Phelim's powers of attraction, to be rather a discouraging one. Gracey Dalton was also given up. The matter was now serious, the time short, and Phelim's

* *i.e.*, transportation.

bounces touching his own fascinations with the sex in general were considerably abated. It was, therefore, resolved that he ought to avail himself of Sam Appleton's clothes until his own could be made. Sam, he said, would not press him for them immediately, inasmuch as he was under obligation to Phelim's silence upon some midnight excursions that he had made.

" Not," added Phelim, " but I'm as much, an' maybe more, in his power than he is in mine."

When breakfast was over, Phelim and the father, after having determined to " drink a bottle " that night in the family of a humble young woman, named Donovan, who, they all agreed, would make an excellent wife for him, rested upon their oars until evening. In the meantime Phelim sauntered about the village, as he was in the habit of doing, whilst the father kept the day as a holiday. We have never told our readers that Phelim was in love, because, in fact, we know not whether he was or not. Be this as it may, we simply inform them that in a little shed in the lower end of the village lived a person with whom Phelim was very intimate, called Foodle Flattery. He was, indeed, a man after Phelim's own heart, and Phelim was a boy after his. He maintained himself by riding country races ; by handling, breeding, and feeding cocks ; by fishing, poaching, and serving processes ; and, finally, by his knowledge as a cow-doctor and farrier—into the two last of which he had given Phelim some insight. We say the two last, for in most of the other accomplishments Phelim was fully his equal. Phelim frequently envied him his life. It was an idle, amusing, vagabond kind of existence, just such a one as he felt a relish for. This man had a daughter, rather well-looking ; and it so happened that

he and Phelim had frequently spent whole nights out together, no one knew on what employment. Into Flattery's house did Phelim saunter with something like an inclination to lay the events of the day before him, and to ask his advice upon his future prospects. On entering the cabin he was much surprised to find the daughter in a very melancholy mood ; a circumstance which puzzled him not a little, as he knew that they lived very harmoniously together. Sally had been very useful to her father, and if fame did not belie her, was sometimes worthy Foodle's assistant in his nocturnal exploits. She was certainly reputed to be " light-handed "—an imputation which caused the young men of her acquaintance to avoid, in their casual conversations with her, any allusion to matrimony.

" Sally, *achora*," said Phelim, when he saw her in distress, " what's the fun ? Where's your father ? "

" Oh, Phelim," she replied, bursting into tears, " long run's the fox, but he's cotch at last. My father's in gaol."

Phelim's jaw dropped. " In gaol ! *Chorp an diouol*, no ! "

" It's thruth, Phelim. Curse upon this Whiteboy business ; I wish it had never come into the counthry at all."

" Sally, I must see him ; you know I must. But tell me how it happened. Was it at home he was taken ? "

" No ; he was taken this mornin' in the market. I was wid him sellin' some chickens. What'll you and Sam Appleton do, Phelim ? "

" Uz ! Why, what danger is there aither to Sam or me, you darlin' ? "

" I'm sure, Phelim, I don't know ; but he tould me

that if I was provided for he'd be firm, an' take chance of his thrial. But he says, poor man, that it ud break his heart to be thransported, lavin' me behind him wid nobody to take care o' me. He says, too, if anything ud make him stag, it's fear of the thrial goin' aginst himself; for, as he said to me, 'what ud become of you, Sally, if anything happened me?'"

A fresh flood of tears followed this disclosure, and Phelim's face, which was certainly destined to undergo on that day many variations of aspect, became remarkably blank.

"Sally, you insinivator, I'll hould a thousand guineas you'd never guess what brought me here to-day."

"*Arrah*, how could I, Phelim? To plan somethin' wid my fadher, maybe."

"No, but to plan somethin' wid yourself, you coaxin' jewel, you. Now tell me this—Would you marry a certain gay, roguish, well-built young fellow they call Bouncin' Phelim?"

"Phelim, don't be gettin' an wid your fun now, an' me in affliction. Sure, I know well you wouldn't throw yourself away on a poor girl like me, that has nothing but a good pair of hands to live by."

"Be my sowl, an' you live by them. Well, but set in case—supposin'—that same Bouncin Phelim was willin' to make you mistress of the half acre, what ud you be sayin'?"

"Phelim, if a body thought you worn't jokin' them—Ah, the dickens go wid you, Phelim—this is more o' your thricks—But if it was thruth you wor spakin', Phelim?"

"It is thruth," said Phelim; "be the vestment, it's

nothin' else. Now, say yes or no; for if it's a thing that it's to be a match, you must go an' tell him that I'll marry you, an' he must be as firm as a rock. But see—Sally, by thim five crasses, it's not bekase your father's in I'm marryin' you at all. Sure, I'm in love wid you, *acushla!* Divil a lie in it. Now, yes or no?"

"Well—throth—to be sure—the sorra one, Phelim, but you have quare ways wid you. Now, are you downright in airnest?"

"Be the stool I'm sittin' on!"

"Well, in the name o' goodness, I'll go to my father an' let him know it. Poor man, it'll take the fear out of his heart. Now, can he depind on you, Phelim?"

"Why, all I can say is that we'll get ourselves called on Sunday next. Let himself, sure, send some one to autorise the priest to call us. An' now that all's settled, don't I 'desarve something'? Oh, begorra, surely."

"Behave, Phelim—oh—oh—Phelim, now—there, you've luck it—och, the curse of the crows on you, see the way you have my hair down! There now, you broke my comb, too Throth, you're a wild slip, Phelim. I hope you won't be goin' on this a-way wid the girls when you get married."

"Is it me, you coaxer? No; faith, I'll wear a pair of winkers, for 'fraid o' lookin' at them at all. Oh, begorra, no, Sally; I'll lave that to the great people. Sure, they say, the divil a differ they make at all."

"Go off now, Phelim, till I get ready and set out to my father. But, Phelim, never breathe a word about him bein' in gaol. No one knows it but ourselves—that is none o' the neighbours."

"I'll sing dumb," said Phelim "Well, *banaght lath a*

rogorah! Tell him the thruth—to be game, and he'll find you and me sweeled together whin he comes out, plase goodness."

Phelim was but a few minutes gone when the old military cap of Fool Art projected from the little bedroom, which a wicker wall, plastered with mud, divided from the other part of the cabin.

"Is he gone?" said Art.

"You may come out, Art," said she, "he's gone."

"Ha!" said Art, triumphantly, "I often tould him, when he vexed me an' pelted me wid snowballs, that I'd come 'long sides wid him yet. An' it's not over aither. Fool Art can snore when he's not asleep, an' see wid his eyes shut. Wherroo for Art!"

"But Art, maybe he intinds to marry the housekeeper afther all?"

"Hi the colic, the colic!
An' ho the colic for Phelim!"

"Then you think he won't, Art?"

"Hi the colic, the colic!
An' ho the colic for Phelim!"

"Now, Art, don't say a word about my father not bein' in gaol. He's to be back from my grandfather's in a short time, an,' if we manage well, you'll see what you'll get, Art—a brave new shirt, Art."

"Art has the lane for Phelim, but it's not the long one wid no turn in it. Wherroo for Art!"

Phelim, on his return home, felt queer. Here was a second matrimonial predicament, considerably worse than the first, into which he was hooked decidedly against his will. The worst feature in this case was the danger to be apprehended from Foodle Flattery's disclosures, should he take it into his head to peach upon

his brother Whiteboys. Indeed, Phelim began to consider it a calamity that he ever entered into their system at all; for, on running over his exploits along with them, he felt that he was liable to be taken up any morning of the week and lodged in one of His Majesty's boarding-houses. The only security he had was the honesty of his confederates; and experience took the liberty of pointing out to him many cases in which those who considered themselves quite secure upon the same grounds either dangled or crossed the water. He remembered, too, some prophecies that had been uttered concerning him with reference both to hanging and matrimony. Touching the former, it was often said that "he'd die where the bird flies"—between heaven and earth; on matrimony, that there seldom was a swaggerer among the girls but came to the ground at last.

Now, Phelim had a memory of his own, and in turning over his situation, and the prophecies that had been so confidently pronounced concerning him, he felt, as we said, rather queer. He found his father and mother in excellent spirits when he got home. The good man had got a gallon of whisky on credit; for it had been agreed on not to break the ten golden guineas until they should have ascertained how the matchmaking would terminate that night at Donovan's.

"Phelim," said the father, "strip yourself, an' put on Sam's clo'es; you must send him down yours for a day or two; he says it's the least he may have the wearin' o' them, so long as you have his."

"Right enough," said Phelim; "wid all my heart. I'm ready to make a fair swap wid him any day, for that matther."

"I sent word to the Donovans that we're to go to coort there to-night," said Larry, "so that they'll be prepared for us; an' as it would be shabby not to have a friend, I asked Sam Appleton himself. He's to folly us."

"I see," said Phelim, "I see. Well, the best boy in Europe Sam is for sich a spree. Now, fadher, you must lie like the ould *diouol* to-night. Back everything I say, an' there's no fear of us. But about what she's to get, you must hould out for that. I'm to despise it, you know. I'll abuse you for spakin' about fortune, but don't budge an inch."

"It's not the first time I've done that for you, Phelim; but in regard o' these ten guineas, why, you must put them in your pocket, for 'fraid they'd be wantin' to get off wid layin' down guinea for guinea. You see, they don't think we have a rap; an' if they propose it, we'll be up to them."

"Larry," observed Sheelah, "don't make a match, except they give that pig they have. Hould out for that by all means."

"Tare-an'-ounze!" exclaimed Phelim, "am I goin' to take the counthry out o' the face? By the vestments, I'm a purty boy! Do you know the fresh news I have for yees?"

"Not ten guineas more, Phelim," replied the father.

"Maybe you soodhered another ould woman," said the mother.

"Be asy," replied Phelim. "No, but by the five crasses, I deluded a young one since I went out!"

The old couple were once more disposed to be mirthful, but Phelim confirmed his assertion with such a multiplicity of oaths that they believed him. Nothing,

however, could wring the secret of her name out of him. He had reasons for concealing it which he did not wish to divulge. In fact, he could never endure ridicule, and the name of Sally Flattery as the person whom he had "deluded" would constitute on his part a triumph quite as sorry as that which he had achieved in Father O'Hara's. In Ireland no man ever thinks of marrying a female thief—which Sally was strongly suspected to be—except some worthy fellow who happens to be gifted with the same propensity.

When the proper hour arrived, honest Phelim, after having already made arrangements to be called on the following Sunday as the intended husband of two females, now proceeded with great coolness to make, if possible, a similar engagement with a third.

There is something, however, to be said for Phelim. His conquest over the housekeeper was considerably out of the common course of love affairs. He had drawn upon his invention only to bring himself and the old woman out of the ridiculous predicament in which the priest found them. He had, moreover, intended to prevail on her to lend him the hat, in case the priest himself had refused him. He was, consequently, not prepared for the vigorous manner in which Mrs. Doran fastened upon the subject of matrimony. On suspecting that she was inclined to be serious, he pleaded his want of proper apparel; but here, again, the liberality of the housekeeper silenced him, whilst, at the same time, it opened an excellent prospect of procuring that which he most required—a decent suit of clothes. This induced him to act a part that he did not feel. He saw the old woman was resolved to outwit him, and he resolved to overreach the old woman.

His marriage with Sally Flattery was to be merely a matter of chance. If he married her at all, he knew it must be in self-defence. He felt that her father had him in his power, and that he was anything but a man to be depended on. He also thought that his being called with her on the Sunday following would neutralise his call with the housekeeper; just as positive and negative quantities in algebra cancel each other. But he was quite ignorant that the story of Flattery's imprisonment was merely a plan of the daughter's to induce him to marry her.

With respect to Peggy Donovan, he intended, should he succeed in extricating himself from the meshes which the other two had thrown around him, that she should be the elected one to whom he was anxious to unite himself. As to the confusion produced by being called to three at once, he knew that, however laughable in itself, it would be precisely something like what the parish would expect from him. "Bouncing Phelim" was no common man, and to be called to three on the same Sunday would be a corroboration of his influence with the sex. It certainly chagrined him not a little that one of them was an old woman, and the other of indifferent morals, but still it exhibited the claim of three women upon one man, and that satisfied him. His mode of proceeding with Peggy Donovan was regular, and according to the usages of the country. The notice had been given that he and his father would go a-courting, and, of course, they brought the whisky with them, that being the custom among persons in their circumstances in life. These humble courtships very much resemble the driving of a bargain between two chapmen; for, indeed, the closeness of the demands on the one side,

and the reluctance of concession on the other, are almost incredible. Many a time has a match been broken up by a refusal on the one part to give a slip of a pig, or a pair of blankets, or a year-old calf. These are small matters in themselves, but they are of importance to those who perhaps have nothing else on earth with which to begin the world.

The house to which Phelim and his father directed themselves was, like their own, of the humblest description. The floor of it was about sixteen feet by twelve; its furniture rude and scanty. To the right of the fire was a bed, the four posts of which ran up to the low roof; it was curtained with straw mats, with the exception of an opening about a foot and a half wide on the side next the fire, through which those who slept in it passed. A little below the foot of the bed were ranged a few shelves of deal, supported by pins of wood driven into the wall. These constituted the dresser. In the lower end of the house stood a potato-bin, made up of stakes driven into the floor, and wrought with strong wickerwork. Tied to another stake beside this bin stood a cow, whose hinder part projected so close to the door that those who entered the cabin were compelled to push her over out of their way. This, indeed, was effected without much difficulty, for the animal became so habituated to the necessity of moving aside, that it was only necessary to lay the hand upon her. Above the door in the inside, almost touching the roof, was the hen-roost, made also of wickerwork; and opposite the bed, on the other side of the fire, stood a meal-chest, its lid on a level with the little pane of glass which served as a window. An old straw chair, a few stools, a couple of pots, some wooden vessels and crockery, completed

the furniture of the house. The pig to which Sheelah alluded was not kept within the cabin, that filthy custom being now altogether obsolete.

This catalogue of cottage furniture may appear to our English readers very miserable. We beg them to believe, however, that if every cabin in Ireland were equally comfortable, the country would be comparatively happy. Still, it is to be remembered that the *dramatis personæ* of our story are of the humblest class.

When seven o'clock drew nigh, the inmates of this little cabin placed themselves at a clear fire ; the father on one side, the mother at the other, and the daughter directly between them, knitting, for this is usually the occupation of a female on such a night. Everything in the house was clear, the floor swept, the ashes removed from the hearth, the parents in their best clothes, and the daughter also in her holiday apparel. She was a plain girl, neither remarkable for beauty nor otherwise. Her eyes, however, were good, so were her teeth, and an anxious look, produced, of course, by an occasion so interesting to a female, heightened her complexion to a blush that became her. The creature had certainly made the most of her little finery. Her face shone like that of a child after a fresh scrubbing with a strong towel ; her hair, carefully curled with the hot blade of a knife, had been smoothed with soap until it became lustrous by repeated polishing, and her best red ribbon was tied tightly about it in a smart knot, that stood out on the side of her head with something of a coquettish air. Old Donovan and his wife maintained a conversation upon some indifferent subject, but the daughter evidently paid little attention to what they said. It being near the hour appointed for Phelim's arrival, she sat with an

appearance of watchful trepidation, occasionally listening, and starting at every sound that she thought bore any resemblance to a man's voice or footstep.

At length the approach of Phelim and his father was announced by a verse of a popular song, for singing which Phelim was famous:

> "'A sailor coorted a farmer's daughter
> That lived contagious to the Isle of Man.
> A long time coortin', an' still discoorsin'
> Of things consarnin' the ocean wide;
> At linth he saize, "Me own dearest darlint,
> Will you consint for to be me bride?'"

"An' so she did consint, the darlin'; but what the puck would she do else? God save the family! Paddy Donovan, how is your health? Molly, *avourneen*, I'm glad to hear that you're thrivin'. An' Peggy—eh! Ah, begorra, fadher, here's somethin' to look at! Give us the hand of you, you bloomer! Och, och! faith, you're the daisy!"

"Phelim," said the father, "will you behave yourself? Haven't you the night before you for your capers? Paddy Donovan, I'm glad to see you! Molly, give us your right hand, for, in throth, I have a regard for you! Peggy, dear, how are you? But I'm sure I needn't be axin' when I look at you! In throth, Phelim, she is somethin' to throw your eye at."

"Larry Toole, you're welcome," replied Donovan and his wife, "an' so is your son. Take stools, both of you, an' draw near the hearth. Here, Phelim," said the latter, "draw in an' sit beside myself."

"Thank you kindly, Molly," replied Phelim; "but I'll do no sich thing. *Arrah*, do you think, now, that I'd begin to *gosther* wid an ould woman, while I have the likes o' Peggy, the darlin', beside me? I'm up to

a thrick worth nine of it. No, no ; this chest'll do. Sure, you know, I must help the ' duck of diamonds ' here to count her stitches."

" Paddy," said Larry, in a friendly whisper, " put this whisky past for a while, barrin' this bottle that we must taste for good luck. Sam Appleton's to come up afther us, an' I suppose some o' your own *cleaveens* 'ill be here afther a while."

" Thrue for you," said Donovan. " Jemmy Burn and Antony Devlin is to come over presently. But, Larry, this is nonsense. One bottle o' whisky was lashins ; my goodness, what'll we be doin' wid a whole gallon ? "

" Dacency or nothin', Paddy ; if it was my last I'd show sperit, an' why not ? Who'd be for the shabby thing ? "

" Well, well, Larry, I can't say but you're right, afther all ! Maybe I'd do the same thing myself, for all I'm spakin' aginst it."

The old people then passed round an introductory glass, after which they chatted away for an hour or so, somewhat like the members of a committee who talk upon indifferent topics until their brethren are all assembled.

Phelim, in the meantime, grappled with the daughter, whose knitting he spoiled by hooking the thread with his finger, jogging her elbow until he ran the needles past each other, and finally unravelling her clue ; all which she bore with great good-humour. Sometimes, indeed, she ventured to give him a thwack upon the shoulder, with a laughing frown upon her countenance, in order to correct him for teasing her.

When Jemmy Burn and Antony Devlin arrived, the spirits of the party got up. The whisky was formally

produced, but as yet the subject of the courtship, though perfectly understood, was not introduced. Phelim and the father were anxious to await the presence of Sam Appleton, who was considered, by the way, a first-rate hand at match-making.

Phelim, as is the wont, on finding the din of the conversation raised to the proper pitch, stole one of the bottles, and prevailed on Peggy to adjourn with him to the potato-bin. Here they ensconced themselves very snugly; but not, as might be supposed, contrary to the knowledge and consent of the seniors, who winked at each other on seeing Phelim gallantly tow her down with the bottle under his arm. It was only the common usage on such occasions, and not considered any violation whatsoever of decorum. When Phelim's prior engagements are considered, it must be admitted that there was something singularly ludicrous in the humorous look he gave over his shoulder at the company as he went toward the bin, having the bottom of the whisky bottle projecting behind his elbow, winking at them in return, by way of a hint to mind their own business and allow him to plead for himself. The bin, however, turned out to be rather an uneasy seat, for, as the potatoes lay in a slanting heap against the wall, Phelim and his sweetheart were perpetually sliding down from the top to the bottom. Phelim could be industrious when it suited his pleasure. In a few minutes those who sat about the fire imagined, from the noise at the bin, that the house was about to come about their ears.

"Phelim, you thief," said the father, "what's all that noise for?"

"*Chrosh orrin!*" said Molly Donovan, "is that tundher?"

"Devil carry these piatees," exclaimed Phelim, raking them down with both hands and all his might, "if there's any sittin' at all upon them! I'm levellin' them to prevint Peggy, the darlin', from slidderin', an' to give us time to be talkin' somethin' lovin' to one another. The curse o' Cromwell an them! One might as well dhrink a glass o' whisky wid his sweetheart, or spake a tindher word to her, on the wings of a windmill as here. There now, they're as level as you plase, *acushla!* Sit down, you jewel, you, an' give me the egg-shell, till we have a sup o' the crathur in comfort. Faith, it was too soon for us to be comin' down in the world!"

Phelim and Peggy, having each emptied the egg-shell, which among the poorer Irish is frequently the substitute for a glass, entered into the following sentimental dialogue, which was covered by the loud and entangled conversation of their friends about the fire; Phelim's arm lovingly about her neck, and his head laid down snugly against her cheek.

"Now, Peggy, you darlin' o' the world—bad cess to me, but I'm as glad as two tenpennies that I levelled these piatees; there was no sittin' an them. Eh, *avourneen?*"

"Why, we're comfortable now, anyhow, Phelim!"

"Faith, you may say that"—(a loving squeeze). "Now, Peggy, begin an' tell us all about your bachelors."

"The sarra one ever I had, Phelim."

"Oh, murdher, *sheery*, what a bounce! Bad cess to me if you can spake a word o' thruth afther that, you common desaver! Worn't you an' Paddy Moran pullin' a coard?"

"No, in throth; it was given out on us, but we never wor, Phelim. Nothin' ever passed betune us but common

civility. He thrated my father an' mother wanst to share of half a pint in the Lammas Fair, when I was along wid them ; but he never broke discoorse wid me, barrin', as I sed, in civility an' friendship."

" An' do you mane to put it down my throath that you never had a sweetheart at all ? "

" The nerra one."

" Oh, you thief ! Wid two sich lips o' your own, an' two sich eyes o' your own, and two sich cheeks o' your own !—oh, by the tarn, that won't pass."

" Well, an' supposin' I had—behave, Phelim—supposin' I had, where's the harm ? Sure, it's well known all the sweethearts you had, an' yet have, I suppose."

" Begorra, an' that's thruth ; an' the more the merrier, you jewel, you, till one gets marrid. I had enough o' them in my day ; but you're the flower o' them all, that I'd like to spend my life wid "—(a squeeze).

" The sarra one word the men say a body can trust. I warrant you tould that story to every one o' them as well as to me. Stop, Phelim—it's well known that what you say to the *colleens* is no gospel. You know what they christened you ' Bouncin' Phelim ' for ? "

" Betune you an' me, Peggy, I'll tell you a sacret : I was the boy for deludin' them. It's very well known the matches I might a' got ; but, you see, you little shaver, it was waitin' for yourself I was."

" For me ! A purty story, indeed ! I'm sure it was ! Oh, afther that ! Why, Phelim, how can you—Well, well, did anyone ever hear the likes ? "

" Be the vestments, it's thruth. I had you in my eye these three years, but was waitin' till I'd get together as much money as ud set us up in the world dacently.

Give me that egg-shell agin. Talkin's druthy work. *Shudorth, a rogarah!* an' a pleasant honeymoon to us!"

"Wait till we're marrid first, Phelim; thin it'll be time enough to dhrink *that*."

"Come, *acushla*, it's your turn now; taste the shell an' you'll see how lovin' it'll make us. Mother's milk's a thrifle to it."

"Well, if I take this, Phelim, I'll not touch another dhrop to-night. In the manetime, here's whatever's best for us! Whoo! Oh, my! but that's strong! I dunna how the people can dhrink so much of it!"

"Faith, nor me; except bekase they have a regard for it, an' that it's worth havin' a regard for, jist like yourself an' me. Upon my faix, Peggy, it bates all, the love an' likin' I have for you, an' ever had these three years past. I tould you about the eyes, *mavourneen*, an'—an'—about the lips——"

"Phelim—behave—I say—now stop wid you—well—well—but you're the tazin' Phelim! Throth, the girls may be glad when you're marrid!" exclaimed Peggy, adjusting her polished hair.

"Bad cess to the bit if ever I got so sweet a one in my life—the soft end of a honeycomb's a fool to it. One thing, Peggy, I can tell you—that I'll love you in great style. Whin we're marrid it's I that'll *soodher* you up. I won't let the wind blow on you. You must give up workin' too. All I'll ax you to do will be to nurse the childher; an' that same will keep you busy enough, plase goodness."

"Upon my faix, Phelim, you're the very sarra, so you are. Will you be asy, now! I'll engage when you're marrid it'll soon be another story wid you. Maybe you'd care little about us thin!"

" Be the vestments, I'm spaking pure gospel, so I am Sure, you don't know that to be good husbands runs in our family. Every one o' them was as sweet as thracle to their wives. Why, there's that ould cock, my fadher, an' if you'd see how he butthers up the ould woman to this day, it ud make your heart warm to any man o' the family."

" Ould an' young was ever an' always the same to you, Phelim. Sure, the ouldest woman in the parish, if she happened to be single, couldn't miss of your blarney. It's reported you're going to be marrid to an ould woman."

" He—hem—ahem ! Bad luck to this cowld I have ! It's stickin' in my throath entirely, so it is !—hem !—To a what ? "

" Why, to an ould woman wid a great deal o' the hard goold ! "

Phelim put his hand instinctively to his waistcoat pocket, in which he carried the housekeeper's money.

" Would you oblige one wid her name ?

" You know ould Molly Kavanagh well enough, Phelim."

Phelim put up an inward ejaculation of thanks.

" To the sarra wid her, an' all sasoned women ! God be praised—that the night's fine, anyhow ! Hand me the shell, and we'll take a *gauliogue* aich, an' afther that we'll begin an' talk over how lovin' an' fond o' one another we'll be."

" You're takin' too much o' the whisky, Phelim. Oh, for goodness' sake !—oh—b—b—n—now be asy. Faix, I'll go to the fire, an' lave you altogether, so I will, if you don't give over slustherin' me that way, an' stoppin' my breath."

"Here's all happiness to our two selves, *acushla machree!* Now thry another *gauliogue*, an' you'll see how deludin' it'll make you."

"Not a sup, Phelim."

"*Arrah*, nonsense! Be the vestments, it's as harmless as new milk from the cow. It'll only do you good, *alanna*. Come, now, Peggy, don't be ondacent, an' it our first night's coortin'! Blood alive! don't make little o' my father's son on sich a night, an' us at business like this, anyhow!"

"Phelim, by the crass, I won't take it; so that ends it. Do you want to make little o' me? It's not much you'd think o' me in your mind if I'd dhrink it."

"The shell's not half full."

"I wouldn't break my oath for all the whisky in the kingdom; so don't ax me. It's neither right nor proper of you to force it an me."

"Well, all I say is that it's makin' little of one Phelim O'Toole, that hasn't a thought in his body but what's over head an' ears in love wid you. I must only dhrink it for you myself, thin. Here's all kinds o' good fortune to us! Now, Peggy—sit closer to me, *acushla!*—now, Peggy, are you fond o' me at all? Tell thruth, now."

"Fond o' you! Sure, you know all the girls is fond of you. Aren't you 'the boy for deludin' them?'"

"Come, come, you shaver; that won't do. Be sarious. If you knew how my heart's warmin' to you this minute, you'd fall in love wid my shadow. Come, now, out wid it. Are you fond of a sartin boy not far from you, called 'Bouncin' Phelim'?"

"To be sure I am. Are you satisfied now? Phelim! I say——"

"Faith, it won't pass, *avourneen*. That's not the

voice for it. Don't you hear me, how tendher I spake wid my mouth brathin' into your ear, *acushla machree?* Now, turn about, like a purty enticin' girl as you are, an' put your sweet bill to my ear the same way, an' whisper what you know into it? That's a darlin'! Will you, *achora?*"

"An' maybe all this time you're promised to another?"

"Be the vestments, I'm not promised to one. Now! Saize the one!"

"You'll say that, anyhow!"

"Do you see my hands acrass? Be thim five crasses, I'm not promised to a girl livin', so I'm not; nor wouldn't, bekase I had you in my eye. Now, will you tell me what I'm wantin' of you? The grace o' heaven light down an you, an' be a good, coaxin' darlin' for wanst! Be this an' be that, if ever you heerd or seen sich doins' an' times as we'll have when we're marrid! Now the *weeny* whisper, *a colleen dhas!*"

"It's time enough yet to let you know my mind, Phelim. If you behave yourself an' be—Why, thin, is it at the bottle agin you are? Now, don't dhrink so much, Phelim, or it'll get into your head. I was sayin' that if you behave yourself, an' be a good boy, I may tell you somethin' soon."

"Somethin' soon! Live horse, an' you'll get grass! Peggy, if that's the way wid you, the love's all on my side, I see clearly. Are you willin' to marry me, anyhow?"

"I'm willin' to do whatsomever my father an' mother wishes."

"I'm for havin' the weddin' off-hand; an', of coorse, if we agree to-night, I think our best plan is to have ourselves called on Sunday. An' I'll tell you what,

avourneen—be the holy vestments, if I was to be 'called' to fifty on the same Sunday, you're the darlin' I'd marry."

"Phelim, it's time for us to go up to the fire; we're long enough here. I thought you had only three words to say to me."

"Why, if you're tired o' me, Peggy, I don't want you to stop. I wouldn't force myself on the best girl that ever stepped."

"Sure, you have tould me all you want to say, an' there's no use in us stayin' here. You know, Phelim, there's not a girl in the parish ud believe a word that ud come out o' your lips. Sure, there's none o' them but you coorted one time or other. If you could get betther, Phelim, I dunna whether you'd be here to-night at all or not."

"Answer me this, Peggy—what do you think your father ud be willin' to give you? Not that I care a *crona bawn* about it, for I'd marry you wid an inch of candle."

"You know my father's but a poor man, Phelim, an' can give little or nothin'. Them that won't marry me as I am needn't come here to look for a fortune."

"I know that, Peggy, an', be the same a-token, I want no fortune at all wid you but yourself, darlin'. In the manetime, to show you that I could get a fortune—*Dher a lorha heena*, I could have a wife wid a hundher an' twenty guineas!"

Peggy received this intelligence much in the same manner as Larry and Sheelah had received it. Her mirth was absolutely boisterous for at least ten minutes. Indeed, so loud had it been, that Larry and her father could not help asking—

"*Arrah*, what's the fun, Peggy *achora?*"

"Oh, nothin'," she replied, "but one o' Phelim's bounces."

"Now," said Phelim, "you won't believe me! Be all the books——"

Peggy's mirth prevented his oaths from being heard. In vain he declared, protested, and swore. On this occasion he was compelled to experience the fate peculiar to all liars. Even truth from his lips was looked upon as falsehood.

Phelim, on finding that he could neither extort from Peggy an acknowledgment of love, nor make himself credible upon the subject of the large fortune, saw that he had nothing for it now, in order to produce an impression, but the pathetic.

"Well," said he, "you may lave me, Peggy *achora*, if you like; but out o' this I'll not budge, wid a blessin', till I cry my skinful, so I won't. Saize the toe I'll move, now, till I'm sick wid cryin'! Oh, murdher alive, this night! Isn't it a poor case entirely, that the girl I'd suffer myself to be turned inside out for won't say that she cares about a hair o' my head! Oh, thin, but I'm the misfortunate blackguard all out! Och, oh! Peggy *achora*, you'll break my heart! Hand me that sheil, *acushla*—for I'm in the height of affliction!"

Peggy could neither withhold it nor reply to him. Her mirth was even more intense now than before; nor, if all were known, was Phelim less affected with secret laughter than Peggy.

"Is it makin' fun o' me you are, you thief—eh? Is it laughin' at me grief you are?" exclaimed Phelim. "Be the tarn o' war, I'll punish you for that."

Peggy attempted to escape; but Phelim succeeded, ere

she went, in taking a salutation or two, after which both joined those who sat at the fire, and in a few minutes Sam Appleton entered.

Much serious conversation had already passed in reference to the courtship, which was finally entered into and debated, *pro* and *con*.

"Now, Paddy Donovan, that we're all together, let me tell you one thing—there's not a betther-natur'd boy, nor a stouther, claner young fellow in the parish than my Phelim. He'll make your daughter as good a husband as ever broke bread!"

"I'm not sayin' aginst that, Larry. He is a good-nathured boy. But I tell you, Larry Toole, my daughther's his fill of a wife any day. An' I'll put this to the back o' that—she's a hard-workin' girl, that ates no idle bread."

"Very right," said Sam Appleton. "Phelim's a hairo, an' she's a beauty. Dang me, but they wor made for one another. Phelim, *abouchal*, why don't you—Oh, I see you are. Why, I was goin' to bid you make up to her."

"Give no *gosther*, Sam," replied Phelim, "but sind round the bottle, an' don't forget to let it come this way. I hardly tasted a dhrop to-night."

"Oh, Phelim!" exclaimed Peggy.

"Whisht!" said Phelim; "there's no use in lettin' the ould fellows be committin' sin. Why, they're hearty* as it is, the sinners."

"Come, nabours," said Burn, "I'm the boy that's for close work. How does the match stand? You're both my friends, an' may this be poison to me, but I'll spake like an honest man for the one as well as for the other."

"Well, then," said Donovan, "how is Phelim to

* Tipsy.

support my daughter, Larry? Sure, that's a fair questin', anyway."

"Why, Paddy," replied Larry, "when Phelim gets her he'll have a patch of his own, as well as another. There's that 'half-acre,' and a betther piece o' land isn't in Europe!"

"Well, but what plenishin' are they to have, Larry? A bare half acre's but a poor look-up."

"I'd as soon you'd not make little of it, in the mane-time," replied Larry, rather warmly. "As good a couple as ever they wor lived on that half-acre; along wid what they earned by hard work otherwise."

"I'm not disparagin' it, Larry; I'd be long sorry. But about the furniture. What are they to begin the world wid?"

"Hut," said Devlin, "go to the sarra wid yees! What ud they want, no more nor other young people like them, to begin the world wid? Are you goin' to make English or Scotch of them, that never marries till they're able to buy a farm an' stock it, the nagers? By the staff in my hand, an Irishman ud lash a dozen o' them, wid all their prudence! Hasn't Phelim an' Peggy health and hands, what most new-married couples in Ireland begins the world wid? Sure, they're not worse nor a thousand others!'

"Success, Antony," said Phelim; "here's your health for that!"

"God be thanked, they have health an' hands," said Donovan. "Still, Antony, I'd like that they'd have somethin' more."

"Well, then, Paddy, spake up for yourself," observed Larry "What will you put to the fore for the *colleen?* Don't take both flesh an' bone!"

"I'll not spake up till I know all that Phelim's to expect," said Donovan. "I don't think he has a right to be axin' anything wid sich a girl as my Peggy."

"Hut, tut, Paddy! She's a good *colleen* enough; but do you think she's above any one that carries the name of O'Toole upon him? Still, it's but rasonable for you to wish the girl well settled. My Phelim will have one-half o' my worldly goods, at all evints."

"Name them, Larry, i' you plase."

"Why, he'll have one o' the goats—the grey one, for she's the best o' the two, in throth. He'll have two stools, three hens, an' a toss-up for the cock; the biggest o' the two pots, two good crocks, three good wooden trenchers, an'—hem—he'll have his own—I say, Paddy, are you listenin' to me?—Phelim, do you hear what I'm givin' you, *a veehonee?*—his own bed! An' there's all I can or will do for him. Now do you spake up for Peggy."

"I'm to have my own bedstead, too!" said Phelim; "an' bad cess to the stouter one in Europe. It's as good this minute as it was eighteen years agone."

"Paddy Donovan, spake up," said Larry.

"Spake up!" said Paddy, contemptousuly. "Is it for three crowns' worth I'd spake up? The bedstead, Phelim! *Be dhu husht*, man!"

"Put round the bottle," said Phelim; "we're dhry here."

"Thrue enough, Phelim," said the father. "Paddy, here's towarst you an' yours—nabours, all your healths—young couple! Paddy, give us your hand, man alive! Sure, whether we agree or not, this won't put between us."

"Throth, it won't, Larry—an' I'm thankful to you.

Your health, Larry, an' all your healths! Phelim and Peggy, success to yees, whether or not! An' now, in regard o' your civility, I will spake up. My proposal is this—I'll put down guinea for guinea wid you."

Now we must observe, by the way, that this was said under the firm conviction that neither Phelim nor the father had a guinea in their possession.

"I'll do the same, Paddy," said Larry; "but I'll lave it to the present company if you're not bound to put down the first guinea. Nabours, amn't I right?"

"You are right, Larry," said Burn; "it's but fair that Paddy should put down the first."

"Molly *achora*," said Donovan to the wife, who, by the way, was engaged in preparing the little feast usual on such occasions—"Molly *achora*, give me that ould glove you have in your pocket."

She immediately handed him an old shammy glove, tied up into a hard knot, which he felt some difficulty in unloosing.

"Come, Larry," said he, laying down a guinea-note, "cover that like a man."

"Phelim carries my purse," observed the father; but he had scarcely spoken when the laughter of the company rang loudly through the house. The triumph of Donovan appeared to be complete, for he thought the father's allusion to Phelim tantamount to an evasion.

"Phelim! Phelim carries it! Faix, an' I doubt he finds it a light burdyeen."

Phelim approached in all his glory.

"What am I to do?" he inquired, with a swagger.

"You're to cover that guinea-note wid a guinea, if you can," said Donovan.

"Whether ud you prefar goold or notes?" said Phelim, looking pompously about him; "that's the talk."

This was received with another merry peal of laughter.

"Oh, goold—goold by all manes!" replied Donovan.

"Here goes the goold, my worthy," said Phelim, laying down his guinea with a firm slap upon the table.

Old Donovan seized it, examined it, then sent it round, to satisfy himself that it was a *bonâ-fide* guinea.

On finding that it was good he became blank a little; his laugh lost its strength, much of his jollity was instantly neutralised, and his face got at least two inches longer. Larry now had the laugh against him, and the company heartily joined in it.

"Come, Paddy," said Larry, "go an!—ha, ha, ha!"

Paddy fished for half a minute through the glove; and, after what was apparently a hard chase, brought up another guinea, which he laid down.

"Come, Phelim!" said he, and his eye brightened again with a hope that Phelim would fail.

"Good agin!" said Phelim, thundering down another, which was instantly subjected to a similar scrutiny.

"You'll find it good," said Larry. "I wish we had a sackful o' them. Go an, Paddy. Go an, man; who's afeard?"

"Sowl, I'm done," said Donovan, throwing down the purse with a hearty laugh. "Give me your hand, Larry. Be the goold afore us, I thought to do you. Sure, these two guineas is for my rint, an' we musn't let them come atween us at all."

"Now," said Larry, "to let you see that my son's not widout something to begin the world wid—Phelim, shell out the rest o' the yallow boys."

"Faix, you ought to dhrink the ould woman's health for this," said Phelim. "Poor ould crathur, many a long day she was saving up these for me. It's my mother I'm speakin' about."

"An' we will, too," said the father; "here's Sheelah's health, nabours!—the best poor man's wife that ever threwn a gown over her shouldher."

This was drunk with all the honours, and the negotiation proceeded.

"Now," said Appleton, "what's to be done? Paddy, say what you'll do for the girl."

"Money's all talk," said Donovan; "I'll give the girl the two-year-old heifer—an' that's worth double what his father has promised Phelim! I'll give her a stone o' flax, a dacent suit o' clo'es, my blessin'—an' there's her fortune."

"Has she neither bed nor beddin'?" inquired Larry.

"Why, don't you say that Phelim's to have his own bed?" observed Donovan. "Sure, one bed 'ill be plenty for them."

"I don't care a damn about fortune," said Phelim, for the first time taking a part in the bargain, "so long as I get the darlin' herself. But I think there ud be no harm in havin' a spare pair o' blankets—an', for that matther, a bedstead, too—in case a friend came to see a body."

"I don't much mind givin' you a brother to the bedstead you have, Phelim," replied Donovan, winking at the company, for he was perfectly aware of the nature of Phelim's bedstead.

"I'll tell you what you must do," said Larry, "otherwise I'll not stand it. Give the *colleen* a chaff bed, blankets, an' all other parts complate, along wid that

slip of a pig. If you don't do this, Paddy Donovan, why, we'll finish the whisky, an' part friends—but it's no match."

"I'll never do it, Larry. The bed an' beddin' I'll give; but the pig I'll by no manner o' manes part wid."

"Put round the bottle," said Phelim, "we're gettin' dhry agin—saying nothin' is dhroothy work. Ould man, will you not bother us about fortune!"

"Come, Paddy Donovan," said Devlin, "dang it, let out a little; considher he has ten guineas; an' I give it as my downright maxim an' opinion that he's fairly entitled to the pig."

"You're welcome to give your opinion, Antony, an' I'm welcome not to care a rotten sthraw about it. My daughther's wife enough for him, widout a gown to her back, if he had his ten guineas doubled."

"An' my son," said Larry, "is husband enough for a betther girl nor ever called you father—not makin' little, at the same time, of either you or her."

"Paddy," said Burn, "there's no use in spakin' that way. I agree wid Antony that you ought to throw in the 'slip.'"

"Is it what I have to pay my next gale o' rint wid? No, no! If he won't marry her widout it, she'll get as good that will."

"Saize the 'slip,'" said Phelim, "the darlin' herself here is all the 'slip' I want."

"But I'm not so," said Larry; "the 'slip' must go in, or it's a break-off. Phelim can get girls that has money enough to buy us all out o' root. Did you hear that, Paddy Donovan?"

"I hear it," said Paddy, "but I'll b'lieve as much of it as I like."

Phelim apprehended that, as his father got warm with the liquor, he might, in vindicating the truth of his own assertion, divulge the affair of the old housekeeper.

"Ould man," said he, "have sinse, an' pass that over, if you have any regard for me."

"I'd not be brow-bate into anything," observed Donovan.

"Sowl, you would not," said Phelim. "For my part, Paddy, I'm ready to marry your daughther—(a squeeze to Peggy)—widout a hap'orth at all, barrin' herself. It's the girl I want, an' not the 'slip.'"

"Thin, be the book, you'll get both, Phelim, for your dacency," said Donovan; "but, you see, I wouldn't be bullied into puttin' one foot past the other for the best man that ever stepped on black leather."

"Whisht!" said Appleton, "that's the go! Success, ould heart! Give us your hand, Paddy; here's your good health, an' may you never button an empty pocket!"

"Is all settled?" inquired Molly.

"All but about the weddin' an' the calls," replied her husband. "How are we to do about that, Larry?"

"Why, in the name o' goodness, to save time," he replied, "let them be called on Sunday next, the two Sundays afther, and thin marrid, wid a blessin'."

"I agree wid that entirely," observed Molly. "An' now, Phelim, clear away, you an' Peggy, off o' that chist, till we have our bit o' supper in comfort."

"Phelim," said Larry, "when the supper's done, you must slip over to Roche's for a couple o' bottles more o' whisky. We'll make a night of it."

"There's two bottles in the house," said Donovan; "an', be the saikerment, the first man that talks of bringin' in more till these is dhrunk is ondacent."

This was decisive. In the meantime the chest was turned into a table, the supper laid, and the attack commenced. All was pleasure, fun, and friendship. The reader may be assured that Phelim, during the negotiation, had not misspent the time with Peggy. Their conversation, however, was in a tone too low to be heard by those who were themselves talking loudly.

One thing, however, Phelim understood from his friend Sam Appleton, which was, that some clue had been discovered to an outrage in which he (Appleton) had been concerned. Above all other subjects, that was one on which Phelim was but a poor comforter. He himself found circumspection necessary; and he told Appleton that if ever danger approached him he had resolved either to enlist, or to go to America, if he could command the money.

"You ought to do that immediately," added Phelim.

"Where's the money?" replied the other.

"I don't know," said Phelim; "but if I was bent on goin', the want of money wouldn't stop me, as long as it could be found in the counthry. We had to do as bad for others, an' it can't be a greater sin to do that much for ourselves."

"I'll think of it," said Appleton. "At any rate, it's in for a penny, in for a pound, wid me."

When supper was over they resumed their drinking, sang songs, and told anecdotes with great glee and hilarity. Phelim and Peggy danced jigs and reels, whilst Appleton sang for them, and the bottle also did its duty.

On separating about two o'clock there was not a sober man among them but Appleton. He declined drinking, and was backed in his abstemiousness by Phelim, who

knew that sobriety on the part of Sam would leave himself more liquor. Phelim therefore drank for them both, and that to such excess that Larry, by Appleton's advice, left him at his father's, in consequence of his inability to proceed homewards. It was not, however, without serious trouble that Appleton could get Phelim and the father separated; and when he did, Larry's grief was bitter in the extreme. By much entreaty, joined to some vigorous shoves towards the door, he was prevailed upon to depart without him; but the old man compensated for the son's absence by indulging in the most vociferous sorrow as he went along about "his Phelim." When he reached home his grief burst out afresh; he slapped the palms of his hands together, and indulged in a continuous howl, that one on hearing it would imagine to be the very echo of misery. When he had fatigued himself he fell asleep on the bed, without having undressed, where he lay until near nine o'clock the next morning. Having got up and breakfasted, he related to his wife, with an aching head, the result of the last night's proceedings. Everything, he assured her, was settled; Phelim and Peggy were to be called the following Sunday, as Phelim, he supposed, had already informed her.

"Where's Phelim?" said the wife; "an' why didn't he come home wid you last night?"

"Where is Phelim! Why, Sheelah woman, sure he did come home wid me last night!"

"*Chrosh orrin*, Larry, no! What could happen him? Why, man, I thought you knew where he was; an' in regard of his bein' abroad so often at night, myself didn't think it sthrange,"

Phelim's absence astounded them both, particularly

the father, who had altogether forgotten everything that had happened on the preceding night after the period of his intoxication. He proposed to go back to Donovan's to inquire for him, and was about to proceed there when Phelim made his appearance, dressed in his own slender apparel only. His face was three inches longer than usual, and the droop in his eye remarkably conspicuous.

" No fear of him," said the father—" here's himself. *Arrah*, Phelim, what became of you last night ? Where wor you ? "

Phelim sat down very deliberately and calmly, looked dismally at his mother, and then looked more dismally at his father.

" I suppose you're sick too, Phelim," said the father. " My head's goin' round like a top.

" Ate your breakfast," said his mother ; " it's the best thing for you."

" Where wor you last night, Phelim ? " inquired the father.

" What are you sayin', ould man ? "

" Who wor you wid last night ? "

" Do, Phelim," said the mother, " tell us, *aroon !* I hope it wasn't *out* you wor. Tell us, *avourneen !* "

" Ould woman, what are you talkin' about ? "

Phelim whistled *Ulican dhu oh*, or the " Song of Sorrow." At length he bounced to his feet, and exclaimed in a loud, rapid voice—

" *Ma chorp an diouol !* ould couple, but I'm robbed of my ten guineas by Sam Appleton ! "

" Robbed by Sam Appleton ! Heavens above ! " exclaimed the father.

"Robbed by Sam Appleton! *Gra machree*, Phelim! no, you aren't!" exclaimed the mother.

"*Gra machree* yourself, but I say I am," replied Phelim —"robbed clane of every penny of it!"

Phelim then sat down to breakfast—for he was one of those happy mortals whose appetite is rather sharpened by affliction—and immediately related to his father and mother the necessity which Appleton's connection had imposed on him of leaving the country; adding that while he was in a state of intoxication he had been stripped of Appleton's clothes; that his own were left beside him; that when he awoke the next morning he found his borrowed suit gone; that on searching for his own he found, to his misery, that the ten guineas had disappeared along with Appleton, who, he understood from his father, had "left the neighbourhood for a while, till the throuble he was in ud pass over."

"But I know where he's gone," said Phelim, "an' may the divil's luck go wid him; an' God's curse on the day I ever had anything to do wid that hell-fire Ribbon business! 'Twas he first brought me into it, the villain; an' now I'd give the townland we're in to be fairly out of it."

"*Hanim an diouol!*" said the father, "is the ten guineas gone? The curse of hell upon him, for a black desaver! Where's the villain, Phelim?"

"He's gone to America," replied the son. "The divil tear the tongue out o' myself, too! I should be puttin' him up to go there, an' to get money, if it was to be had. The villain bit me fairly."

"Well, but how are we to manage?" inquired Larry. "What's to be done?"

"Why," said the other, "to bear it, an' say nothin'. Even if he was in his father's house, the double-faced villain has me so much in his power that I couldn't say a word about it. My curse on the Ribbon business, I say, from my heart out!"

That day was a miserable one to Phelim and the father. The loss of the ten guineas and the feverish sickness produced by their debauch rendered their situation not enviable. Some other small matters too, in which Phelim was especially concerned, independent of the awkward situation in which he felt himself respecting the three calls on the following day, which was Sunday, added greater weight to his anxiety. He knew not how to manage, especially upon the subject of his habiliments, which certainly were in a very dilapidated state. An Irishman, however, never despairs. If he has not apparel of his own sufficiently decent to wear on his wedding day, he borrows from a friend. Phelim and his father remembered that there were several neighbours in the village who would oblige him with a suit for the wedding; and as to the other necessary expenses, they did what their countrymen are famous for—they trusted to chance.

"We'll work ourselves out of it some way," said Larry. "Sure, if all fails us, we can sell the goats for the weddin' expenses. It's one comfort that Paddy Donovan must find the dinner; an' all we have to get is the whisky, the marriage-money, an' some other thrifles."

"They say," observed Phelim, "that people have more luck whin they're marrid than whin they're single. I'll have a bout at the marriage, so I will; for worse

luck I can't have if I had half a dozen wives, than I always met wid."

"I'll go down," observed Larry, "to Paddy Donovan's an' send him to the priest's to give in your names to be called to-morrow. Faith, it's well that you won't have to appear, or I dunna how you'd get over it."

"No," said Phelim, "that bill won't pass. You must go to the priest yourself, an' see the curate; if you go near Father O'Hara, it ud knock a plan on the head that I've invinted. I'm in the notion that I'll make the ould woman bleed agin. I'll squeeze as much out of her as 'ill bring me to America, for I'm not overly safe here; or, if all fails, I'll marry her, an' run away wid the money. It ud bring us all acrass."

Larry's interview with the curate was but a short one. He waited on Donovan, however, before he went, who expressed himself satisfied with the arrangement, and looked forward to the marriage as certain. As for Phelim, the idea of being called to three females at the same time was one that tickled his vanity very much. Vanity where the fair sex was concerned had been always his predominant failing. He was not finally determined on marriage with any of them; but he knew that, should he even escape the three, the *éclat* resulting from so celebrated a transaction would recommend him to the sex for the remainder of his life. Impressed with this view of the matter, he sauntered about as usual; saw Foodle Flattery's daughter, and understood that her uncle had gone to the priest to have his niece and worthy Phelim called the next day. But besides this hypothesis Phelim had another, which, after all, was the real one. He hoped that the three applications would prevent the priest from calling him at all.

The priest, who possessed much sarcastic humour, on finding the name of Phelim come in as a candidate for marriage honours with three different women, felt considerably puzzled to know what he could be at. That Phelim might hoax one or two of them was very probable ; but that he should have the effrontery to make him the instrument of such an affair, he thought a little too bad.

" Now," said he to his curate, as they talked the matter over that night, " it is quite evident that this scapegrace reckons upon our refusing to call him with any of those females to-morrow. It is also certain that not one of the three to whom he has pledged himself is aware that he is under similar obligations to the other two."

" How do you intend to act, sir ? " inquired the curate.

" Why," said Father O'Hara, " certainly to call him to each ; it will give the business a turn for which he is not prepared. He will stand exposed, moreover, before the congregation, and that will be some punishment to him."

" I don't know as to the punishment," replied the curate. " If ever a human being was free from shame, Phelim is. The fellow will consider it a joke."

" Very possible," observed his superior ; " but I am anxious to punish this old woman. It may prevent her from uniting herself with a fellow who would, on becoming master of her money, immediately abandon her—perhaps proceed to America."

" It will also put the females of the parish on their guard against him," said the innocent curate, who knew not that it would raise him highly in their estimation

" We will have a scene, at all events," said Father O'Hara ; " for I'm resolved to expose him. No blame

can be attached to those whom he has duped, excepting only the old woman, whose case will certainly excite a great deal of mirth. That matters not, however; she has earned the ridicule, and let her bear it."

It was not until Sunday morning that the three calls occurred to Phelim in a new light. He forgot that the friends of the offended parties might visit upon his proper carcass the contumely he offered to them. This, however, did not give him much anxiety, for Phelim was never more in his element than when entering upon a row.

The Sunday in question was fine, and the congregation unusually large: one would think that all the inhabitants of the parish of Teernarogarah had been assembled. Most of them certainly were.

The priest, after having gone through the usual ceremonies of the Sabbath worship, excepting those with which he concludes the Mass, turned round to the congregation, and thus addressed them:—

"I would not," said he, "upon any other occasion of this kind think it necessary to address you at all; but this is one perfectly unique, and in some degree patriarchal, because, my friends, we are informed that it was allowed in the times of Abraham and his successors to keep more than one wife. This custom is about being revived by a modern, who wants, in rather a barefaced manner, to palm himself upon us as a patriarch. And who do you think, my friends, this Irish patriarch is? Why, no other than 'Bouncing Phelim O'Toole'!"

This was received precisely as the priest had anticipated: loud were the shouts of laughter from all parts of the congregation.

"Divil a fear o' Phelim!" they exclaimed. "He

wouldn't be himself or he'd kick up a dust some way."

"Blessed Phelim! Jist like him! Faith, he couldn't be marrid in the common coorse!"

"*Arrah*, whisht till we hear the name o' the happy crathur that's to be blisthered wid Phelim! The darlin's in luck, whoever she is, an' has gained a prize in the 'bouncer.'"

"This patriarch," continued the priest, "has made his selection with great judgment and discrimination. In the first place, he has pitched upon a hoary damsel of long standing in the world—one blessed with age and experience. She is qualified to keep Phelim's house well, as soon as it shall be built; but whether she will be able to keep Phelim himself is another consideration. It is not unlikely that Phelim, in imitation of his great prototypes, may prefer living in a tent. But whether she keeps Phelim or the house, one thing is certain, that Phelim will keep her money. Phelim selected this aged woman, we presume, for her judgment; for, surely, she who has given such convincing proof of discretion must make a useful partner to one who, like Phelim, has that virtue yet to learn. I have no doubt, however, but in a short time he will be as discreet as his teacher."

"Blood alive! Isn't that fine language?"

"You may say that! Begad, it's himself can discoorse! What's the Protestants to that?"

"The next upon the list is one who, though a poor man's daughter, will certainly *bring property* to Phelim. There is also an aptness in this selection which does credit to the 'patriarch.' Phelim is a great dancer, an accomplishment of which we do not read that the patriarchs themselves were possessed; although we certainly do read that a light heel was of a little service to

Jacob. Well, Phelim carries a light heel, and the second female of his choice on this list carries a 'light hand'; it is therefore but natural to suppose that, if ever they are driven to extremities, they will make light of many things which other people would consider of weighty moment. Whether Phelim and she may long remain stationary in this country is a problem more likely to be solved at the county assizes then here. It is not improbable that his Majesty may recommend the patriarch and one of his wives to try the benefit of a voyage to New South Wales, he himself graciously vouchsafing to bear their expenses."

"Divil a lie in that, anyhow! If ever any one crossed the wather, Phelim will. Can't his reverence be funny when he plases?"

"Many a time it was prophecized for him; an' his reverence knows best."

"Begad, Phelim's gettin' over the coals. But sure, it's all the way the father an' mother reared him."

"Tundher-an'-turf, is he goin' to be called to a pair o' them?"

"Faix, so it seems."

"Oh, the divil's clip! Is he mad? But let us hear it out."

"The third damsel is by no means so well adapted for Phelim as either of the other two. What she could have seen in him is another problem much more difficult than the one I have mentioned. I would advise her to reconsider the subject, and let Phelim have the full benefit of the attention she may bestow upon it. If she finds the patriarch possessed of but one virtue, except necessity, I will admit that it is pretty certain

that she will soon discover the longitude, and that has puzzled the most learned men of the world. If she marries this patriarch, I think the angels who may visit him will come in shape of policemen; and that Phelim, so long as he can find a cudgel, will give them anything but a patriarchal reception, is another thing of which we may rest pretty certain.

"I now publish the banns of matrimony between Phelim O'Toole, of Teernarogarah, and Bridget Doran, of Dernascobe. If any person knows of any impediment why these two should not be joined in wedlock, they are bound to declare it.

"This Bridget Doran, my friends, is no other than my old housekeeper; but when, where, or how Phelim could have won upon her juvenile affections is one of those mysteries which is never to be explained. I dare say the match was brought about by despair on her side, and necessity on his. She despaired of getting a husband, and he had a necessity for the money. In point of age I admit she would make a very fit wife for any patriarch."

Language could not describe the effect which this disclosure produced upon the congregation. The fancy of everyone present was tickled at the idea of a union between Phelim and the old woman. It was followed by roars of laughter, which lasted several minutes.

"Oh, thin, the curse o' the crows upon him, was he only able to butther up the ould woman! Oh, *Ghe dhiven!* that flogs. Why, it's a wondher he didn't stale the ould slip, an' make a runaway match of it!—ha, ha, ha! *Musha*, bad scran to her, but she had young notions of her own! A purty bird she picked up in Phelim!—ha, ha, ha!"

"I also publish the banns of matrimony between Phelim O'Toole, of Teernarogarah, and Sally Flattery, of the same place. If any of you know of any impediment why they should not be joined in wedlock, you are bound to declare it."

The mirth rose again loud and general. Foodle Flattery, whose character was so well known, appeared so proper a father-in-law for Phelim that his selection in this instance delighted them highly.

"Betther an' betther, Phelim! More power to you! You're fixed at last. Foodle Flattery's daughter—a known thief! Well, what harm? Phelim himself has pitch on his fingers—or had, anyhow, when he was growin' up—for many a thing stuck to them. Oh, bedad, now we know what his reverence was at when he talked about the 'sizes, bad luck to them! Betune her an' the ould woman, Phelim ud be in Paradise! Foodle Flattery's daughter! Begad, she'll 'bring him property,' sure enough, as his reverence says."

"I also publish the banns of matrimony between Phelim O'Toole—whom we must in future call the 'Patriarch'—of Teernarogarah, and Peggy Donovan of the same place. If any of you know any impediment in the way of their marriage, you are bound to declare it."

"Bravo! Phelim, *acushla*. 'Tis you that's the blessed youth. Tundher-an'-whisky, did ever anybody hear of such desate? To do three o' them! Be sure the bouncer has some schame in this. Well, one would suppose Paddy Donovan an' his daughter had more sinse nor to think of sich a runagate as bouncin' Phelim."

"No, but the pathriark! Sure, his reverence sez

that we mustn't call him anything agin but the pathriark! Oh, begorra, that's the name!—ha, ha, ha!"

When the mirth of the congregation had subsided, and their comments ended, the priest concluded in the following words:—

"Now, my friends, here is such a piece of profligacy as I have never, in the whole course of my pastoral duties, witnessed. It is the act of Phelim O'Toole, be it known, who did not scruple to engage himself for marriage to three females—that is, to two girls and an old woman—and who, in addition, had the effrontery to send me his name and theirs, to be given out all on the same Sunday; thus making me an instrument in his hands to hoax those who trusted in his word. That he can marry but one of them is quite clear; but that he would not scruple to marry the three, and three more to complete the half-dozen, is a fact which no one who knows him will doubt. For my part, I know not how this business may terminate. Of a truth he has contrived to leave the claims of the three females in a state of excellent confusion. Whether it raise or lessen him in their opinion, I cannot pretend to determine. I am sorry for Donovan's daughter, for I know not what greater calamity could befall any honest family than a matrimonial union with Phelim O'Toole. I trust that this day's proceedings will operate as a caution to the females of the parish against such an unscrupulous reprobate. It is for this purpose only that I publish the names given in to me. His character was pretty well known before; it is now established; and having established it, I dismiss the subject altogether."

Phelim's fame was now nearly at its height. Never before had such a case been known; yet the people

somehow were not so much astonished as might be supposed; on the contrary, had Phelim's courtship gone off like that of another man, they would have felt more surprised. We need scarcely say that the "giving out" or "calling" of Phelim and the three damsels was spread over the whole parish before the close of that Sunday. Every one had it—man, woman, and child. It was told, repeated, and improved as it went along. New circumstances were added, fresh points made out, and other *dramatis personæ* brought in—all with great felicity, and quite suitable to Phelim's character.

Strongly contrasted with the amusement of the parishioners in general was the indignation felt by the three damsels and their friends. The old housekeeper was perfectly furious; so much so, indeed, that the priest gave some dark hints at the necessity of sending for a strait waistcoat. Her fellow-servants took the liberty of breaking some strong jests upon her, in return for which she took the liberty of breaking two strong churn-staves upon them. Being a remarkably strong woman for her years, she put forth her strength to such purpose that few of them went to bed without sore bones. The priest was seriously annoyed at it, for he found that his house was a scene of battle during the remainder of the day.

Sally Flattery's uncle, in the absence of her father, indignantly espoused the cause of his niece. He and Donovan each went among their friends to excite in them a proper resentment, and to form a faction for the purpose of chastising Phelim. Their chagrin was bitter on finding that their most wrathful representations of the insult sustained by their families were received with no other spirit than one of the most extravagant mirth.

In vain did they rage, and fume, and swear ; they could get no one to take a serious view of it. Phelim O'Toole was the author of all, and from him it was precisely what they had expected.

Phelim himself and the father, on hearing of the occurrence after Mass, were as merry as any other two in the parish. At first the father was disposed to lose his temper ; but on Phelim telling him he would hear no *gosther* on the subject, he thought proper to take it in good humour. About this time they had not more than a week's provision in the house, and only three shillings of capital. The joke of the three calls was too good a one to pass off as an ordinary affair—they had three shillings, and although it was their last, neither of them could permit the matter to escape as a dry joke. They accordingly repaired to the little public-house of the village, where they laughed at the world, got drunk, hugged each other, despised all mankind, and staggered home, ragged and merry, poor and hearty, their arms about each other's necks, perfect models of filial duty and paternal affection.

The reader is aware that the history of Phelim's abrupt engagement with the housekeeper was conveyed by Fool Art to Sally Flattery. Her thievish character rendered marriage as hopeless to her as length of days did to Bridget Doran. No one knew the plan she had laid for Phelim but this fool ; and in order to secure his silence she had promised him a shirt on the Monday after the first call. Now, Art, as was evident by his endless habit of shrugging, felt the necessity of a shirt very strongly.

About ten o'clock on Monday he presented himself to Sally, and claimed his recompense.

"Art," said Sally, "the shirt I intended for you is upon Squire Nugent's hedge beside their garden. You know the family's goin' up to Dublin on Thursday, Art, an' they're gettin' their washin' done in time to be off. Go down, but don't let anyone see you; take the third shirt on the row, an' bring it up to me till I smooth it for you."

Art sallied down to the hedge on which the linen had been put out to dry, and having reconnoitred the premises, shrugged himself, and cast a longing eye on the third shirt. With that knavish penetration, however, peculiar to such persons, he began to reflect that Sally might have some other object in view besides his accommodation. He determined, therefore, to proceed upon new principles —sufficiently safe, he thought, to protect him from the consequences of theft.

"Good-morrow, Bush," said Art, addressing that on which the third shirt was spread. "Isn't it a burnin' shame an' a sin for you," he continued, "to have sich a fine white shirt an you, an' me widout a stitch to my back. Will you swap?"

Having waited until the bush had due time to reply—

"Sorra fairer," he observed; "silence gives consint."

In less than two minutes he stripped, put on one of the Squire's best shirts, and spread out his own dusky fragment in its place.

"It's a good thing," said Art, "to have a clear conscience; a fair exchange is no robbery."

Now, it so happened that the Squire himself, who was a humourist, and also a justice of the peace, saw Art putting his morality in practice at the hedge. He immediately walked out with an intention of playing

off a trick upon the fool for his dishonesty ; and he felt the greater inclination to do this in consequence of an opinion long current, that Art, though he had outwitted several, had never been outwitted himself.

Art had been always a welcome guest in the Squire's kitchen, and never passed the " Big House," as an Irish country gentleman's residence is termed, without calling. On this occasion, however, he was too cunning to go near it—a fact which the Squire observed. By taking a short cut across one of his own fields he got before Art, and turning the angle of a hedge, met him trotting along at his usual pace.

" Well, Art, where now ? "

" To the crass roads, your honour."

" Art, is not this a fine place of mine ? Look at these groves, and the lawn, and the river there, and the mountains behind all. Is it not equal to Sir William R——'s ? " (Sir William was Art's favourite patron.)

" Sir William, your honour, has all this at his place."

" But I think my views are finer."

" They're fine enough," replied Art ; " but where's the lake before the door ? "

The Squire said no more about his prospects.

" Art," he continued, " would you carry a letter for me to M—— ? "

" I'll be wantin' somethin' to dhrink on the way," said Art.

" You shall get something to eat and drink before you go," said the Squire," and half-a-crown for your trouble."

" Augh," exclaimed Art, " be dodda, sir, you're

nosed like Sir William, and chinned like Captain Taylor." This was always Art's compliment when pleased.

The Squire brought him up to the house, ordered him refreshment, and while Art partook of it, wrote a letter or mittimus to the county gaoler, authorising him to detain the bearer in prison until he should hear further from him.

Art, having received the half-crown and the letter, appeared delighted; but on hearing the name of the person to whom it was addressed, he smelt a trick. He promised faithfully, however, to deliver it, and betrayed no symptoms whatever of suspicion. After getting some distance from the big house, he set his wits to work, and ran over in his mind the names of those who had been most in the habit of annoying him. At the head of this list stood Phelim O'Toole, and on Phelim's head did he resolve to transfer the revenge which the Squire, he had no doubt, intended to take on himself.

With considerable speed he made his way to Larry O'Toole's, where such a scene presented itself as made him for a moment forget the immediate purport of his visit.

Opposite Phelim, dressed out in her best finery, stood the housekeeper, zealously insisting on either money or marriage. On one side of him stood old Donovan and his daughter, whom he had forced to come, in the character of a witness, to support his charges against the gay deceiver. On the other were ranged Sally Flattery in tears and her uncle in wrath, each ready to pounce upon Phelim.

Phelim stood the very emblem of patience and good-humour. When one of them attacked him he winked at the other two; when either of the other two came on

he winked still at those who took breath. Sometimes he trod on his father's toe, lest the old fellow might lose the joke, and not unfrequently proposed their going to a public-house, and composing their differences over a bottle, if any of them would pay the expenses.

"What do you mane to do?" said the housekeeper—"but it's asy known I'm an unprotected woman, or I wouldn't be thrated as I am. If I had relations livin' or near me, we'd pay you on the bones for bringin' me to shame and scandal as you have done."

"Upon my *sannies*, Mrs. Doran, I feel for your situation, so I do," said Phelim. "You've outlived all your friends, an' if it was in my power to bring any o' them back to you I'd do it."

"Oh, you desaver, is that the feelin' you have for me, when I thought you'd be a guard an' projection to me? You know I have the money, you sconce, an' how comfortable it ud keep us, if you'd only see what's good for you. You blarneyed an' palavered me, you villain, till you got my infections, an' thin you tuck the colic, as an excuse to lave me in a state of dissolution an' disparagement. You promised to marry me, an' you had no notion of it."

"You're not the only one he has disgraced, Mrs. Doran," said Donovan. "A purty way he came down, himself an' his father, undher pretence of coortin' my daughter. He should lay down his ten guineas, too, to show us what he had to begin the world wid, the villain!—an' him had no notion of it aither."

"An' he should send this girl to make me go to the priest to have him and her called, the reprobate!" said Nick Flattery—"an' him had no notion of it aither."

"Sure, he sent us all there!" exclaimed Donovan.

"He did," said the old woman.

"Not a doubt of it," observed Flattery.

"Ten guineas!" said the housekeeper. "An' so you brought my ten guineas in your pocket to coort another girl! Aren't you a right profligate?"

"Yes," said Donovan, "aren't you a right profligate?"

"Answer the dacent people," said Flattery—"aren't you a right profligate?"

"Take the world asy, all of yees," replied Phelim. "Mrs. Doran, there was three of you called, sure enough; but, be the vestments, I intinded—Do you hear me, Mrs. Doran? Now have rason—I say, do you hear me? Be the vestments, I intinded to marry only one of you; an' that I'll do still, except I'm vexed—(a wink at the old woman). Yet you're all flyin' at me, as if I had three heads upon me."

"Maybe the poor boy's not so much to blame," said Mrs. Doran. "There's hussies in this world," and here she threw an angry eye upon the other two, "that ud give a man no pace till he'd promised to marry them."

"Why did he promise to them that didn't want him, thin?" exclaimed Donovan. "I'm not angry that he didn't marry my daughther—for I wouldn't give her to him now—but I am at the slight he put an her."

"Paddy Donovan, did you hear what I said jist now?" replied Phelim. "I wish to Jamini some people ud have sinse! Be them five crasses, I know thim I intended to marry, as well as I do where I'm standin'. That's plain talk, Paddy. I'm sure the world's not past yet, I hope"—(a wink at Paddy Donovan).

"An' wasn't he a big rascal to make little of my

brother's daughther as he did ? " said Flattery ; " but he'll rub his heels together for the same act."

" Nick Flatthery, do you think I could marry three wives ? Be that horseshoe over the door, Sally Flatthery, you didn't thrate me dacent. She did not, Nick ; an' you ought to know that it was wrong of her to come here to-day."

" Well, but what do you intind to do, Phelim, *avourn*—you profligate ? " said the half-angry, half-pacified housekeeper, who, being the veteran, always led on the charge.

" Why, I intind to marry one of you," said Phelim. " I say, Mrs. Doran, do you see thim ten fingers acrass —be thim five crasses, I'll do what I said, if nothing happens to put it aside."

" Then be an honest man," said Flattery, " an' tell us which o' them you will marry."

" Nick, don't you know I always regarded your family ? If I didn't, that I may never do an ill turn ! Now ! But some people can't see anything. *Arrah*, tundher-an'-whisky, man, would you expect me to tell out, before all that's here, who I'll marry—to be hurtin' the feelin's of the rest. Faith, I'll never do a shabby thing."

" What rekimpinse will you make my daughther for bringin' down her name afore the whole parish, along wid thim she oughtn't to be named in the one day wid ? " said Donovan.

" An' who is that, Paddy Donovan ? " said the housekeeper, with a face of flame.

" None of your broad hints, Paddy," said Nick. " If it's a collusion to Sally Flattery you mane, take care I don't make you ate your words."

"Paddy," exclaimed Phelim, "you oughtn't to be hurtin' their feelin's!"—(a friendly wink to Paddy).

"If you mane me," said the housekeeper, "by the crook on the fire, I'd lave you a mark."

"I mane you for one, thin, since you provoke me." replied Donovan.

"For one is it?" said Nick; "an' who's the other, i' you plase?"

"Your brother's daughther," he replied. "Do you think I'd even my daughther to a thief?"

"Begorra," observed Phelim, "that's too provokin', an' what I wouldn't bear. Will yees keep the pace, I say, till I spake a word to Mrs. Doran? Mrs. Doran, can I have a word or two wid you outside the house?"

"To be sure you can," she replied; "I'd give you fair play if the *diouol* was in you."

Phelim accordingly brought her out, and thus accosted her:

"Now, Mrs. Doran, you think I thrated you ondacent; but do you see that book?" said he, producing a book of ballads, on which he had sworn many a similar oath before. "Be the contints o' that book, as sure as you're beside me, it's you I intind to marry! These other two—the curse o' the crows upon them! I wish we could get them from about the place—is both dyin' for love o' me, an' I surely did promise to get myself called to them. They wanted it to be a promise of marriage; but, says I, 'Sure, if we're called together it's the same, for whin it comes to that, all's right'—an' so I tould both o' them, unknownst to one another. *Arrah*, be my sowl, you'd make two like them, so you would; an' if you hadn't a penny, I'd marry you afore aither o'

them to-morrow. Now, there's the whole sacret, an' don't be onaisy about it. Tell Father O'Hara how it is, whin you go home, an' that he must call the three o' you to me agin, on next Sunday, and the Sunday afther, plase goodness; just that I may keep my promise to thim. You know I couldn't have luck or grace if I marrid you wid the sin of two broken promises on me."

"My goodness, Phelim, but you tuck a burdyeen off o' me! Faix, you'll see how happy we'll be."

"To be sure we will! But I'm tould you're sometimes crass, Mrs. Doran. Now, you must promise to be kind an' lovin' to the childher, or, be the vestment, I'll break off the match yet."

"Och, an' why wouldn't I, Phelim, *acushla?* Sure, that's but rason."

"Well, take this book an' swear it. Begorra, your word won't do, for it's a thing my mind's made up on. It's I that'll be fond o' the childher."

"An' how am I to swear it, Phelim? for I never tuck an oath myself yet."

"Take the book in your hand, shut one eye, and say the words afther me. Be the contints o' this book—"

"Be the contints o' this book—"

"I'll be kind, an' motherly, an' boistherous—"

"I'll be kind, an' motherly, an' boistherous—"

"To my own childher—"

"To my own childher—"

"An' never bate or abuse thim—"

"An' never bate or abuse thim—"

Barrin' whin they desarve it."

"Barrin' whin they desarve it."

"An' this I swear—"

"An' this I swear—"

"In the presence of St. Phelim."

"In the presence of St. Phelim."

"Amin!"

"Amin!"

"Now, Mrs. Doran, *acushla*, if you could jist know how aisy my conscience is about the childher, poor crathurs, you'd be in mighty fine spirits. There won't be sich a lovin' husband, begad, in Europe. It's I that'll coax you, an' butther you up like a new pair o' brogues; but, begad, you must be sweeter than liquorice or sugar candy to me. Won't you, darlin'?"

"Be the crass, Phelim, darlin', jewel, I'll be as kind a wife as ever breathed! *Arrah*, Phelim, won't you come down to-morrow evenin'? There'll be no one at home but myself, an'—ha, ha, ha!—Oh, you coaxin rogue! I see you laughin'! Will you come, darlin'?'

"Surely. But, death alive! I was near forgettin'—sure, bad luck to the penny o' the ten guineas but I paid away."

"Paid away! Is it my ten guineas?"

"Your ten guineas, darlin'; an' right well I managed it. Didn't I secure Pat Hanratty's farm by it? Sam Appleton's uncle had it as good as taken; so, begad, I came down wid the ten guineas, by way of airles, an' now we have it. I knew you'd be plased to hear it, an' that you'd be proud to give me ten more for clo'es an' the weddin' expenses. Isn't that good news, *avourneen?*—eh, you duck o' diamonds? Faith, let Phelim alone! An' another thing—I must call you Bridget for the future; it's sweeter an' more lovin'."

"Phelim, I wish you had consulted wid me afore you done it; but it can't be helped. Come down to-morrow evenin', an' we'll see what's to be done."

"The grace o' heaven upon you, but you are the winnin'est woman alive this day! Now take my advice, an' go home widout comin' in. I'm wantin' to get this other pair off o' my hands as well as I can; an' our best way is to do all widout noise. Isn't it, darlin'?"

"It is, Phelim, jewel; an' I'll go."

"Faith, Bridget, you've dealt in thracle afore now, you're so sweet. Now, *acushla*, farewell; an' take care of yourself till to-morrow evenin'!"

Phelim, on re-entering his father's cabin, found Larry and Peggy Donovan placed between her father and Flattery, each struggling to keep them asunder. Phelim at first had been anxious to set them by the ears, but his interview with the old woman changed his plan of operations altogether. With some difficulty he succeeded in repressing their tendency to single combat, which having effected, he brought out Flattery and his niece, both of whom he thus addressed—

"Be the vestment, Sally, only that my regard an' love for you is uncommon, I'd break off the affair altogether, so I would."

"An' why would you do so, Phelim O'Toole?" inquired the uncle.

"Bekase," replied Phelim, "you came here an' made a show of me when I wished to have no *brieuliagh* at all, at all. In regard of Peggy Donovan, I never spoke a word to the girl about marriage since I was christened. Saize the syllable! My father brought me down there to *gosther* a while the other night, an' Paddy sent away for whisky. An' the curse o' Cromwell on myself! I should get tossicated. So while I was half-says over, the two ould rips set to makin' the match—planned to have us called—an' me knew nothin' about it, good,

bad, or indifferent. That's the thruth, be the sky above us ! "

" An' what have you to say about the housekeeper, Phelim ? "

" Why, I don't know yet who done me there. I was about takin' a farm, an' my father borrid ten guineas from her. Somebody heard it—I suspect Sam Appleton —an' gave in our names to the priest to be called, makin' a good joke of it. All sorts o' luck to them, barrin' good luck, that did it ; but they put me in a purty state ! But never heed ! I'll find them out yet. Now, go home, both o' you, an' I'll slip down in half-an-hour wid a bottle o' whisky in my pocket. We'll talk over what's to be done. Sure, Sally here knows it's my own intherest to marry her, and no one else."

" If my father thought you would, Phelim, he'd not stag, even if he was to crass the wather ! "

" Go home, Sally darlin', till I get this mad Donovan an' his daughther away. Be all that's beautiful, I'll be apt to give him a taste o' my *shillelagh* if he doesn't behave himself ! Half an hour I'll be down in—wid the bottle ; an' don't you go, Nick, till you see me."

" Phelim," said the uncle, " you know how the case is : you must either marry the girl, or take a long voyage, *abouchal*. We'll have no bouncin' or palaver."

" Bedad, Nick, I've great patience wid you," said Phelim, smiling—" go off, I say, both of you."

They then proceeded homewards, and Phelim returned to appease the anger of Donovan, as he had that of the others. Fresh fiction was again drawn forth, every word of which the worthy father corroborated. They promised to go down that night and drink another bottle together : a promise which they knew by the state

of their finances it was impossible to fulfil. The prospect of the "booze," however, tranquillised Donovan, who in his heart relished a glass of liquor as well as either Phelim or his father. Shaking of hands and professions of friendship were again beginning to multiply with great rapidity, when Peggy thought proper to make a few observations on the merits of her admirer.

"In regard to me," she observed, "you may save yourselves the throuble o' comin'. I wouldn't marry Phelim, afther what the priest said yistherday, if he had the riches o' the townland we're spakin' in. I never cared for him, nor liked him; an' it was only to plase my father an' mother that I consinted to be called to him at all. I'll never join myself to the likes of him. If I do, may I be a corpse the next minute!"

Having thus expressed herself, she left her father, Phelim, and Larry to digest her sentiments, and immediately went home.

Donovan, who was outrageous at this contempt of his authority, got his hat, with the intention of compelling her to return and retract in their presence what she had said; but the daughter, being the more light-footed of the two, reached home before he could overtake her; where, backed by her mother, she maintained her resolution, and succeeded, ere long, in bringing the father over to her opinion.

During this whole scene in Larry's, Fool Art sat in that wild abstraction which characterises the unhappy class to which he belonged. He muttered to himself, laughed—or rather chuckled—shrugged his shoulders, and appeared to be as unconscious of what had taken place as an automaton. When the coast was clear he

rose up, and, plucking Phelim's skirt, beckoned him towards the door.

"Phelim," said he, when they had got out, "would you like to earn a crown?"

"Tell me how, Art," said Phelim.

"A letther from the Square to the gaoler of M—— gaol. If you bring back an answer, you'll get a crown, your dinner, an' a quart o' sthrong beer."

"But why don't you bring it yourself, Art?"

"Why, I'm afeard. Sure, they'd keep me in gaol, I'm tould, if they'd catch me in it—aha! Bedad, I won't go near them; sure, they'd hang me for shootin' Bonypart—aha!"

"Must the answer be brought back to-day, Art?"

"Oh, it wouldn't do to-morrow at all. Be dodds, no! Five shillin's, your dinner, an' a quart o' sthrong beer!—aha! But you must give me a shillin' or two to buy a sword, for the Square's goin' to make me a captain; thin I'll be grand, an' I'll make you a sargint."

This seemed a windfall to Phelim. The unpleasant dilemma in which Sally Flattery had placed him by the fabricated account of her father's imprisonment made him extremely anxious to see Foodle himself, and to ascertain the precise outrage for which he had been secured. Here, then, was an opportunity of an interview with him, and of earning five shillings, a good dinner, and a quart of strong beer, as already specified.

"Art," said he, "give me the letther, an' I'm the boy that'll soon do the job. Long life to you, Art! Be the contints o' the book, Art, I'll never pelt you or vex you agin, my worthy; an' I'll always call you captain!"

Phelim immediately commenced his journey to M——, which was only five miles distant, and in a very short

time reached the gaol, saw the gaoler, and presented his letter.

The latter, on perusing it, surveyed him with the scrutiny of a man whose eye was practised in scanning offenders.

Phelim, whilst the gaoler examined him, surveyed the strong and massy bolts with which every door and hatchway was secured. Their appearance produced rather an uncomfortable sensation in him; so much so, that when the gaoler asked him his name he thought it more prudent, in consequence of a touch of conscience he had, to personate Art for the present, inasmuch as he felt it impossible to assume any name more safe than that of an idiot.

"My name is Art Maguire," said he in reply to the gaoler. "I'm messenger to Square S——; the one he had was discharged on Friday last. I expect soon to be made groom, too."

"Come this way," said the gaoler, "and you shall have an answer."

He brought Phelim into the prison yard, where he remained for about twenty minutes, labouring under impressions which he felt becoming gradually more unpleasant. His anxiety was not lessened on perceiving twenty or thirty culprits, under the management of the turnkeys, enter the yard, where they were drawn up in a line, like a file of soldiers.

"What's your name?" said one of the turnkeys.

"Art Maguire," replied Phelim.

"Stand here," said the other, shoving him amongst the prisoners. "Keep your head up, you villain, an' don't be ashamed to look your friends in the face. It won't be hard to identify you, at any rate, you scoundrel.

A glimpse of that phiz, even by starlight, would do you, you dog. Jack, tell Mr. S—— to bring in the gintlemen —they're all ready."

Phelim's dismay on finding himself under drill with such a villainous crew was indescribable. He attempted to parley with the turnkey, but was near feeling the weight of his heavy keys for daring to approach a man placed in authority.

While thus chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy, three gentlemen, accompanied by the gaoler, entered the yard, and walked backward and forward in front of the prisoners, whose faces and persons they examined with great care. For a considerable time they could not recognise any of them; but just as they were about to give up the scrutiny, one of the gentlemen approached Phelim, and, looking narrowly into his countenance, exclaimed—

"Here, gaoler, this man I identify. I cannot be mistaken in his face; the rough visage and drooping eye of that fellow put all doubt as to his identity out of question. What's his name?"

"He gives his name, sir, as Arthur Maguire."

"Arthur what, sir?" said another of the turnkeys, looking earnestly at Phelim. "Why, sir, this is the fellow that swore the *alibis* for the Kellys—ay, an' for the Delany's, an' for the O'Briens. His name is Phelim O'Toole; an' a purty boy he is, by all report."

Phelim, though his heart sank within him, attempted to banter them out of their bad opinion of him; but there was something peculiarly dismal and melancholy in his mirth.

"Why, gintlemen—ha, ha!—begorra, I'd take it as a convanience—I mane as a favour—if you'd believe me

that there's a small taste of mistake here. I was sent by Square S—— wid a letter to Mr. S——t, an' he gave me fifty ordhers to bring him back an answer this day. As for Phelim O'Toole, if you mane the rascal who swears the *alibis*, faith, I can't deny but I'm as like him, the villain, as one egg is to another. Bad luck to his 'dhroop,' anyhow; little I thought that it would ever bring me into throuble—ha, ha, ha! Mr. S——t, what answer have you for the Square, sir? Bedad, I'm afeard I'll be late."

"That letter, Master Maguire, or Toole, or whatever your name is, authorises me to detain you as a prisoner until I hear further from Mr. S——."

"I identify him distinctly," said the gentleman once more. "I neither doubt nor waver on the subject; so you will do right to detain him. I shall lodge informations against him immediately."

"Sir," said Phelim to the gaoler, "the Square couldn't mane me at all, in regard that it was another person he gave the letther to, for to bring to you; the other person gave it to me. I can make my oath of that. Begorra, you're playin' your thricks upon sthrangers now, I suppose."

"Why, you lying rascal," said the gaoler, "have you not a few minutes ago asserted to the contrary? Did you not tell me that your name was Arthur, or Art Maguire? that you are Mr. S——'s messenger, and expect to be made his groom? And now you deny all this."

"He's Phelim O'Toole," said the turnkey, "I'll swear to him; but if you wait for a minute I'll soon prove it."

He immediately retired to the cell of a convict whom he knew to be from the townland of Teernafogarah, and ordering its inmate to look through the bars of his

window, which commanded the yard, he asked him if there was anyone among them whom he knew.

The fellow in a few minutes replied, " Whethen, divil a one, barrin' ' Bouncin' Phelim O'Toole.' "

The turnkey brought him down to the yard, where he immediately recognised Phelim as an old friend, shook hands with him, and addressed him by his name.

" Bad luck to you," said Phelim, in Irish, " is this a place to welcome your friends to ? "

" There is some mystery here," said the gaoler. " I suppose the fact is that this fellow returned a wrong name to Mr. S——, and that accounts for the name of Arthur Maguire being in the letter."

All Phelim's attempts to extricate himself were useless. He gave them the proper version of the letter affair with Fool Art, but without making the slightest impression : the gaoler desired him to be locked up.

" Divil fire you all, you villains ! " exclaimed Phelim ; " is it goin' to put me in crib yees are for no rason in life ? Doesn't the whole parish know that I was never off o' my bed for the last three months, wid a complaint I had, antil widin two or three days agone ! "

" There are two excellent motives for putting you in crib," said the gaoler ; " but if you can prove that you have been confined to your bed so long as you say, why, it will be all the better for yourself. Go with the turnkey."

" No ; tarenation to the fut I'il go," said Phelim, " till I'm carrid."

" Doesn't the gintleman identify you, you villain," replied one of the turnkeys ; " an' isn't the Square's letther in your favour ? "

" Villain is id ! " exclaimed Phelim. " An' from a

hangman's cousin, too, we're to bear this !—eh ? Take that, anyhow, an' maybe you'll get more when you don't expect it. Whoo ! Success, Phelim ! There's blood in you still, *abouchal !* "

He accompanied the words by a spring of triumph from the ground, and surveyed the already senseless turnkey with exultation. In a moment, however, he was secured for the purpose of being put into strong irons.

" To the divil's warmin'-pan wid ye all," he continued ; " you may do your worst. I defy yees. Ha ! be the heavens above me, you'll suffer for this, my fine gintlemen. What can yees do but hang or thransport me, you villains ? I tell yees, if a man's sowl had a crust of sin on it a foot thick, the best way to get it off ud be jist to shoot a dozen like you. Sin ! Oh, the divil saize the sin at all in it. But wait ! Did yees ever hear of a man they call Dan O'Connell ? Be my sowl, he'll make yees rub your heels together, for keepin' an innocent boy in gaol, that there's no law or no warrant out for. This is the way we're thrated by thim that's ridin' rough-shod over us. But have a taste o' patience, ye scoundrels ! It won't last, I can tell yees. Our day will soon come, an' then I'd recommend yees to thravel for your health. Hell saize the day's pace or happiness ever will be seen in the country till laws, an' judges, an' juries, an' gaols, an' gaolers, an' turnkeys, an' hangmen is all swep' out of it. Saize the day ! An' along wid them goes the parsons an' procthors, tithes an' taxes, all to the divil together. That day's not far off, ye villains. An' now I tell yees, that if a hair o' my head's touched —ay, if I was hanged to-morrow—I'd lave them behind me that ud put a bullet, wid the help an' blessin' o' God, through anyone that'll injure me ! So lay that to

your conscience, an' do your best. Be the crass, O'Connell 'ill make you look nine ways at wanst for this! He's the boy can put the pin in your noses! He's the boy can make yees thrimble, one an' all o' yees—like a dog in a wet sack! An', wid the blessin' o' God, he'll help us to put our feet on your necks afore long!"

"That's a prudent speech," observed the gaoler; "it will serve you very much."

Phelim consigned him to a very warm settlement in reply.

"Come away, Phelim," said the turnkey, "follow me; you are goin' to be put where you'll have an opportunity of sayin' your prayers."

He then ushered Phelim to a cell, where the reader may easily imagine what he felt. His patriotism rose to a high pitch; he deplored the wrongs of his country bitterly, and was clearly convinced that until gaols, judges, and assizes, together with a long train of similar grievances, were utterly abolished, Ireland could never be right, nor persecuted "boys" like himself at full liberty to burn or murder the enemies of their country with impunity. Notwithstanding these heroic sentiments, an indifferent round oath more than once escaped him against Ribbonism in whole and in part. He cursed the system, and the day and the hour on which he was inveigled into it. He cursed those who had initiated him; nor did his father and mother escape for their neglect of his habits, his morals, and his education. This occurred when he had time for reflection.

The next day Fool Art went to Larry's, where he understood that Phelim was on the missing list. This justified his suspicions of the Squire; but by no means lessened his bitterness against him for the prank he had

intended to play upon him. With great simplicity he presented himself at the big house, and met its owner on the lawn, accompanied by two other gentlemen. The magistrate was somewhat surprised on seeing Art at large, when he imagined him to be under the gaoler's lock and key.

"Well, Art," said he, concealing his amazement, "did you deliver my letter?"

"It went safe, your honour," replied Art.

"Did you yourself give it into his hands, as I ordered you?"

"Whoo! Be dodds, would your honour think Art ud tell a lie? Sure, he read it. Aha!"

"And what did he say, Art?"

"Whoo! Why, that he didn't know which of us had the least sense—you for sendin' a fool on a message, or me for deliverin' it."

"Was that all that happened?"

"No, sir. He said," added the fool, with bitter sarcasm, alluding to a duel in which the Squire's character had not come off with flying colours—"he said, sir, that whin you have another challenge to fight, you may get sick agin for threepence."

This having been the manner in which the Squire was said to have evaded the duel, it is unnecessary to say that Art's readiness to refresh his memory on the subject prevented him from being received at the big house in future.

Reader, remember that we only intended to give you a sketch of Phelim O'Toole's courtship; we will, however, go so far beyond our original plan as to apprise you of his fate.

When it became known in the parish that he was in

gaol, under a charge of felony, Sally Flattery abandoned all hopes of securing him as a husband. The housekeeper felt suitable distress, and hoped, should the poor boy be acquitted, that "he might hould up his head wid any o' them." Phelim, through the agency of his father, succeeded in getting ten guineas from her, to pay the lawyers for defending him, not one penny of which he applied to the purpose for which he obtained it. The expenses of his defence were drawn from the Ribbon-boy fund; and the Irish reader cannot forget the elegant and pathetic appeal made by his counsel to the jury on his behalf, and the strength with which the fact of his being the whole support of a helpless father and mother was stated. The appeal, however, was ineffectual; worthy Phelim was convicted, and sentenced to transportation for life. When his old acquaintances heard the nature of his destiny, they remembered the two prophecies that had been so often uttered concerning him. One of them was certainly fulfilled to the letter —we mean that in which it was stated "that the greatest swaggerer among the girls generally comes to the wall at last." The other, though not literally accomplished, touched at least upon the spirit; transportation for life ranks next to hanging.

We cannot avoid mentioning a fact connected with Phelim which came to light while he remained in prison. By incessant trouble he was prevailed upon, or rather compelled, to attend the prison school, and on examining him touching his religious knowledge, it appeared that he was ignorant of the plainest truths of Christianity; that he knew not how or by whom the Christian religion had been promulgated, nor, indeed, any other moral truth connected with revelation.

Immediately after his transportation Larry took to drink, and his mother to begging, for she had no other means of living. In this mode of life the husband was soon compelled to join her. They are both mendicants, and Sheelah now appears sensible of the error in their manner of bringing Phelim up.

"Ah! Larry," she is sometimes heard to say, "I doubt that we wor wrong for flyin' in the face o' God because He didn't give us childher. An' when it plased Him to grant us a son, we oughtn't to've spoiled him by over-indulgence, an' by lettin' him have his own head in everything, as we did. If we had sint him to school, an' larned him to work, an' corrected him when he desarved it, instead of laughin' at his lies, an' misbehaviour, an' his oaths, as if they wor sport—ay, an' abusin' the nabours when they'd complain of him, or tell us what he was—ay! if we had, it's a credit an' a comfort he'd be to us now, an' not a shame an' a disgrace an' an affliction. We made our own bed, Larry, an' now we must lie down an it. An' God help us! we made *his* bed, too, poor boy, an' a bad one it is. God forgive us! But, anyhow, my heart's breakin', for, bad as he was, sure we haven't him to look upon!"

"Thrue," replied Larry. "Still he was game an' 'cute to the last. Biddy Doran's ten guineas will sarve him *beyant*, poor fellow. But, sure, the 'boys' kep' their word to him, anyhow, in regard of shootin' Foodle Flattery. Myself was never betther plased in my life than to hear that he got the slugs into his heart, the villain!"

FROM

THE GEOGRAPHY OF AN IRISH OATH.

* * * * * * *

Poor Peter, who was an object of great compassion, felt himself completely crushed by the death of his faithful partner. The reader knows that he had hitherto been a sober, and, owing to Ellish's prudent control, an industrious man. To thought or reflection he was not, however, accustomed; he had, besides, never received any education; if his morals were correct, it was because a life of active employment kept him engaged in pursuits which repressed immorality, and separated him from those whose society and influence might have been prejudicial to him. He had scarcely known calamity, and, when it occurred, he was prepared for it neither by experience nor a correct view of moral duty. On the morning of his wife's funeral, such was his utter prostration both of mind and body that even his own sons, in order to resist the singular state of collapse into which he had sunk, urged him to take some spirits. He was completely passive in their hands, and complied. This had the desired effect, and he found himself able to attend the funeral. When the friends of Ellish, after the interment, assembled, as is usual, to drink and talk together, Peter, who could scarcely join in the conversation, swallowed glass after glass of punch with great rapidity. In the meantime the talk became louder and more animated; the punch, of course, began to work, and, as they sat long, it was

curious to observe the singular blending of mirth and sorrow, singing and weeping, laughter and tears which characterised this remarkable scene. Peter, after two hours' hard drinking, was not an exception to the influence of this trait of national manners. His heart, having been deeply agitated, was the more easily brought under the effects of contending emotions. He was naturally mirthful, and when intoxication had stimulated the current of his wonted humour, the influence of this and his recent sorrow produced such an anomalous commixture of fun and disconsolation as could seldom, out of Ireland, be seen checkering the mind of one individual.

It was in the midst of this extraordinary din that his voice was heard commanding silence in its loudest and best humoured key.

"Hould yer tongues," said he; "bad win to yees, don't you hear me wantin' to sing. Whisht wid yees. Hem—och—'Rise up?' Why, thin, Phil Callaghan, you might thrate me wid more dacency, if you had gumption in you; I'm sure no one has a better right to sing first in this company nor myself; an' what's more, I will sing first. Hould your tongues! 'Hem!"

He accordingly commenced a popular song, the air of which, though simple, was touchingly mournful.

"Och, rise up, Willy Reilly, an' come along wid me,
I'm goin' for to go wid you, and lave this coun-ter-ee;
I'm goin' to lave my father, his castles and free lands—
An' away wint Willy Reilly, an' his own Colleen Bawn.

"Och, they wint o'er hills and mountains, and valleys that was fair,
An' fled before her father, as you may shortly hear;
Her father followed afther wid a well-chosen armed band,
Och, an' taken was poor Reilly an' his own Colleen Bawn."

The simple pathos of the tune, the affection implied

by the words, and probably the misfortune of Willy Reilly, all overcame him. He finished the second verse with difficulty, and on attempting to commence a third he burst into tears.

"*Colleen bawn! colleen bawn!*" he exclaimed—"she's lyin' low that was my *colleen bawn!* Oh, will yees hould your tongues, an' let me think of what has happened me? She's gone—Mary, *avourneen*, isn't she gone from us? I'm alone, an' I'll be always lonely. Who have I now to comfort me? I know I have good childher, neighbours; but none o' them—all of them, if they wor ten times as many—isn't aquil to her that's in the grave. Her hands won't be about me—there was tindherness in their very touch. An' of a Sunday mornin' how she'd tie an my handkerchy, for I never could rightly tie it an myself, the knot was ever an' always too many for me; but, och, och, she'd tie it an so snug and purty wid her own hands that I didn't look the same man! The same song was her favourite. Here's your healths; an' sure, it's the first time ever we wor together that she wasn't wid us—but now, *avillish*, your voice is gone—you're silent an' lonely in the grave; an' why shouldn't I be sarry for the wife o' my heart that never angered me? Why shouldn't I? Ay, Mary, *asthore machree*, good right you have to cry afther her; she was the kind mother to you; her heart was fixed in you; there's her fatures on your face—her very eyes, an' fair hair, too; an' I'll love you, *achora*, ten times more nor ever, for her sake. Another favourite song of hers—God rest her—was 'Brian O'Lynn.' Throth, an' I'll sing it, so I will, for if she was livin' she's like it.

"Och, Brian O'Lynn, he had milk an' male,
A two-lugged porringer wantin' a tail."

Och, my head's through other! The sarry wan o' me, I bleeve, but's out o' the words; or, as they say, there's a hole in the ballad. Send round the punch, will yees? By the hole o' my coat, Parra Gastha, I'll whale you widin an inch of your life if you don't dhrink. Send round the punch, Dan; an' give us a song, Parra Gastha. *Arrah*, Paddy, do you remimber—ha, ha, ha!—upon my credit, I'll never forget it—the fun we had catchin' Father Soolaghan's horse the day he gave his shirt to the sick man in the ditch. The Lord rest his sowl in glory—ha, ha, ha!—I'll never forget it. Paddy, the song, you thief!"

"No; but tell them about that, Misther Connell."

"Throth, an' I will; but don't be Mistherin' me. Faith, this is the height o' good punch. You see—ha, ha, ha!—you see, it was one hard summer afore I was married to Ellish—*mavourneen*, that you wor, *asthore!* Och, och, we are parted at last! Upon my sowl, my heart's breakin', breakin' (*weeps*); an' no wondher! But, as I was sayin'—all your healths!—faith it is tip-top punch, that—the poor man fell sick of a faver, an' sure enough, when it was known what ailed him, the neighbours built a little shed on the roadside for him, in regard that everyone was afeard to let him into their place. Howsomever—ha, ha, ha!—Father Soolaghan was one day ridin' past upon his horse, an' seein' the crathur lyin' undher the shed, an' a wishp o' sthraw, he pulls bridle, an' puts the spake an the poor sthranger. So, begad, it came out that the neighbours were very kind to him, an' used to hand over whatsomever they thought best for him from the back o' the ditch as well as they could.

"'My poor fellow,' said the priest, 'you're badly off for linen.'

' 'Thrue for you, sir,' said the sick man. 'I never longed for anything so much in my life as I do for a clane shirt an' a glass o' whisky.'

" 'The divil a glass o' whisky I have about me, but you shall have the clane shirt, you poor compassionate crathur,' said the priest, stretchin' his neck up an' down, to make sure there was no one comin' on the road—ha, ha, ha!

" Well an' good—I have three shirts,' says his reverence, 'but I have only one o' them an me, an' that you shall have.'

" So the priest peels himself on the spot, an' lays his black coat and waistcoat afore him acrass the saddle, thin takin' off his shirt, he threwn it acrass the ditch to the sick man. Whether it was the white shirt or the black coat danglin' about the horse's neck, the divil a one o' myself can say, but, anyway, the baste tuck fright, an' made off wid Father Soolaghan, in the state I'm tellin' yees, upon his back—ha, ha, ha!

" Parra Gastha, here, an' I wor goin' up at the time to do a little in the distillin' way for Tom Duggan of Aidinasamlagh, an' seen what was goin' an. So off we set, an' we splittin' our sides laughin'—ha, ha, ha!—at the figure the priest cut. However, we could do no good, an' he never could pull up the horse till he came full flight to his own house, opposite the pound there below, and the whole town in convulsions when they seen him. We gother up his clothes, an' brought them home to him; an' a good piece o' fun we had wid him, for he loved the joke as well as any man. Well, he was the good an' charitable man, the same Father Soolaghan; but so simple that he got himself into fifty scrapes—God rest him! Och, och, she's lyin' low that often laughed at

that, an' I'm here—ay, I have no one—no one that ud show me sich a warm heart as she would (*weeps*). However, God's will be done. I'll sing yees a song she liked.

> "Och, Brian O'Lynn, he had milk an' male,
> A two-lugged porringer wantin' a tail."

Musha, I'm out agin—ha, ha, ha! Why, I bleeve there's *pishthrogues* an me, or I'd remimber it. Bud-an-age, dhrink all of yees. Lie into the liquor, I say; don't spare it. Here, Mike, send us up another gallon. Faith, we'll make a night of it.

> "Och, three maidens a milkin' did go,
> An' three maidens a-milkin' did go;
> An' the winds they blew high,
> An' the winds they blew low,
> An' they dashed their milkin' pails to an' fro."

All your healths, childher! Neighbours, all your healths! Don't spare what's before yees. It's long since I tuck a jorum myself, an'—come, I say, plase God, we'll often meet this way, so we will. Faith, I'll take a sup from this forrid, wid a blessin'. Dhrink, I say, dhrink!"

By the time he had arrived at this pitch he was able to engross no great portion either of the conversation or attention. Almost everyone present had his songs, his sorrows, his laughter, or his anecdotes, as well as himself. Every voice was loud, and every tongue busy. Intricate and entangled was the talk, which, on the present occasion, presented a union of all the extremes which the lights and shadows of the Irish character alone could exhibit under such a calamity as that which brought the friends of the deceased together.

Peter literally fulfilled his promise of taking a jorum in future. He was now his own master; and as he felt

the loss of his wife deeply, he unhappily had recourse to the bottle to bury the recollection of a woman whose death left a chasm in his heart which he thought nothing but the whisky could fill up.

His transition from a life of perfect sobriety to one of habitual, nay, of daily, intoxication was immediate. He could not bear to be sober; and his extraordinary bursts of affliction, even in his cups, were often calculated to draw tears from the eyes of those who witnessed them. He usually went out in the morning with a flask of whisky in his pocket, and sat down to weep behind a ditch—where, however, after having emptied his flask, he might be heard at a great distance singing the songs which Ellish in her lifetime was accustomed to love. In fact, he was generally pitied; his simplicity of character, and his benevolence of heart, which was now exercised without fear of responsibility, made him more a favourite than he ever had been. His former habits of industry were thrown aside; as he said himself, he hadn't heart to work; his farms were neglected, and but for his son-in-law would have gone to ruin. Peter himself was sensible of this.

"Take them," said he, "into your own hands, Denis—for me, I'm not able to do anything more at them; she that kep' me up is gone, an' I'm broken down. Take them—take them into your own hands. Give me my bed, bit, an' sup, an' that's all I want."

Six months produced an incredible change in his appearance. Intemperance, whilst it shattered his strong frame, kept him in frequent exuberance of spirits; but the secret grief preyed on him within. Artificial excitement kills, but it never cures; and Peter, in the midst of his mirth and jollity, was wasting away into a

shadow. His children, seeing him go down the hill of life so rapidly, consulted among each other on the best means of winning him back to sobriety. This was a difficult task, for his powers of bearing liquor were almost prodigious. He has often been known to drink so many as twenty-five and sometimes thirty tumblers of punch without being taken off his legs or rendered incapable of walking about. His friends, on considering who was most likely to recall him to a more becoming life, resolved to apply to his landlord—the gentleman whom we have already introduced to our readers. He entered warmly into their plan, and it was settled that Peter should be sent for, and induced, if possible, to take an oath against liquor. Early the following day a liveried servant came down to inform him that his master wished to speak with him.

" To be sure," said Peter ; " divil resave the man in all Europe I'd do more for than the same gintleman, if it was only on account of the regard he had for her that's gone. Come, I'll go wid you in a minute."

He accordingly returned with the flask in his hand, sayin, " I never thravel widout a pocket-pistol, John. The times, you see, is not overly safe, an' the best way is to be prepared—ha, ha, ha ! Och, och ! It houlds three half-pints."

" I think," observed the servant, " you had better not taste that till after your return."

" Come away, man," said Peter ; " we'll talk upon it as we go along. I couldn't do really widout it. You hard that I had lost Ellish ? "

" Yes," replied the servant, " and I was very sorry to hear it."

" Did you attend the berrin ? "

"No, but my master did," replied the man; "for, indeed, his respect for your wife was very great, Mr. Connell."

This was before ten o'clock in the forenoon, and about one in the afternoon a stout countryman was seen approaching the gentleman's house, with another man bent round his neck, where he hung precisely as a calf hangs round the shoulders of a butcher when he is carrying it to his stall.

"Good heavens!" said the owner of the mansion to his lady, "what has happened Smith, my dear? Is he dead?"

"Dead!" said his lady, going in much alarm to the drawing-room window—"I protest I fear so, Frank. He is evidently dead! For God's sake go down and see what has befallen him!"

Her husband went hastily to the hall-door, where he met Peter with his burden.

"In the name of heaven, what has happened, Connell?—what is the matter with John? Is he living or dead?"

"First, plase your honour, as I have him on my shouldhers, will you tell me where his bed is?" replied Peter. "I may as well lave him snug, as my hand's in, poor fellow. The divil's bad head he has, your honour. Faith, it's a burnin' shame, so it is, an' nothin' else—to be able to bear so little!"

The lady, children, and servants were now all assembled about the dead footman, who hung, in the meantime, very quietly round Peter's neck.

"Gracious heaven! Connell, is the man dead?" she inquired.

"Faith, thin, he is, ma'am, for a while; but, upon my credit, it's a burnin' shame, so it is——"

"The man is drunk, my dear," said her husband—"he's only drunk."

"A burnin' shame, so it is—to be able to bear no more nor about six glasses, an' the whisky good, too. Will you ordher one o' thim to show me his bed, ma'am, if you plase," continued Peter, while he's an me? It 'ill save throuble."

"Connell is right," observed his landlord. "Gallagher, show him John's bedroom."

Peter accordingly followed another servant, who pointed out his bed, and assisted to place the vanquished footman in a somewhat easier position than that in which Peter had carried him.

"Connell," said his landlord, when he returned, "how did this happen?"

"Faith, thin, it's a burnin' shame, said Connell, "to be able only to bear——"

"But how did it happen? for he has been hitherto a perfectly sober man."

"Faix, plase your honour, asy enough," replied Peter. "He begun to lecthur me about dhrinkin', so, says I, 'Come an' sit down behind the hedge here, an' we'll talk it over between us'; so we went in, the two of us, a-back o' the ditch, an' he began to advise me agin dhrink, an' I began to tell him about her that's gone, sir. Well, well! och, och! no matther!—So, sir, one story, an' one pull from the bottle, brought on another, for divil a glass we had at all, sir. Faix, he's a tindher-hearted boy, anyhow; for, as myself began to let the tears down when the bottle was near out, divil resave the morsel of him but cried afther poor Ellish as if she had been his mother—faix, he did! an' it won't be the last sup we'll

have together, plase goodness! But the best of it was, sir, that the dhrunker he got, he abused me the more for dhrinkin'. Oh, thin, but he's the pious boy when he gets a sup in his head! Faix, it's a pity ever he'd be sober, he talks so much scripthur an' devotion in his liquor!"

"Connell," said the landlord, "I am exceedingly sorry to hear that you have taken so openly and inveterately to drink as you have done ever since the death of your admirable wife. This, in fact, was what occasioned me to send for you. Come into the parlour. Don't go, my dear; perhaps your influence may also be necessary. Gallagher, look to Smith, and see that every attention is paid him, until he recovers the effects of his intoxication."

He then entered the parlour, where the following dialogue took place between him and Peter:—

"Connell, I am really grieved to hear that you have become latterly so incorrigible a drinker; I sent for you to-day with the hope of being able to induce you to give it up."

"Faix, your honour, it's jist what I'd expect from your father's son—kindness, an' dacency, an' devotion wor always among yees. Divil resave the family in all Europe I'd do so much for as the same family."

The gentleman and lady looked at each other, and smiled. They knew that Peter's blarney was no omen of their success in the laudable design they contemplated.

"I thank you, Peter, for your good opinion; but, in the meantime, allow me to ask what can you propose to yourself by drinking so incessantly as you do?"

"What do I propose to myself by dhrinkin', is it? Why, thin, to banish grief, your honour. Surely you'll allow that no man has rason to complain who's able to banish the thief for two shillin's a day. I reckon the whisky at first cost, so that it doesn't come to more nor that at the very outside."

"That is taking a commercial view of affliction, Connell; but you must promise me to give up drinking."

"Why, thin, upon my credit, your honour astonishes me. Is it to give up banishin' grief? I have a regard for you, sir, for many a dalins we had together; but for all that, faix, I'd be miserable for no man, barrin' for her that's gone. If I'd be so to oblage anyone, I'd do it for your family; for divil resave the family in all Europe——"

"Easy, Connell—I am not to be palmed off in that manner. I really have a respect for the character which you bore, and wish you to recover it once more. Consider that you are disgracing yourself and your children by drinking so excessively from day to day—indeed, I am told almost from hour to hour."

"Augh! don't believe the half o' what you hear, sir. Faith, somebody has been dhrawin' your honour out. Why, I'm never dhrunk, sir—faith, I'm not."

"You will destroy your health, Connell, as well as your character; besides, you are not to be told that it is a sin, a crime against God, and an evil example to society."

"Show me the man, plase your honour, that ever seen me incapable. That's the proof o' the thing."

"But why do you drink at all? It is not necessary."

"An' do you never taste a dhrop yourself, sir, plase your honour? I'll be bound you do, sir, raise your little finger of an odd time, as well as another. Eh, ma'am? That's comin' close to his honour! An' faix, small blame to him; an' a *weeshy* sup o' the wine to the misthress herself, to correct the tindherness of her delicate appetite."

"Peter, this bantering must not pass. I think I have a claim upon your respect and deference. I have uniformly been your friend, and the friend of your children and family, but more especially of your late excellent and exemplary wife."

"Before God an' man, I acknowledge that, sir—I do—I do. But, sir, to spake sarious—it's thruth, ma'am, downright—to spake sarious, my heart's broke, an' every day it's breakin' more an' more. She's gone, sir, that used to manage me; an' now I can't turn myself to anything, barrin' the dhrink—God help me!"

"I honour you, Connell, for the attachment which you bear towards the memory of your wife, but I utterly condemn the manner in which you display it. To become a drunkard is to disgrace her memory. You know it was a character she detested."

"I know it all, sir, an' that you have thruth an' rason on your side; but, sir, you never lost a wife that you loved; an' long may you be so, I pray the Heavenly Father this day! Maybe if you did, sir, plase your honour, that, wid your heart sinkin' like a stone widin you, you'd thry whether or not something couldn't rise it. Sir, only for the dhrink I'd be dead."

"There I totally differ from you, Connell. The drink only prolongs your grief, by add ng to it the

depression of spirits which it always produces. Had you not become a drinker, you would long before this have been once more a cheerful, active, and industrious man. Your sorrow would have worn away gradually, and nothing but an agreeable melancholy—an affectionate remembrance of your excellent wife—would have remained. Look at other men "

" But where's the man, sir, had sich a wife to grieve for as she was ? Don't be hard on me, sir. I'm not a dhrunkard. It's thrue I dhrink a great dale ; but thin I can bear a great dale, so that I'm never incapable."

" Connell," said the lady, " you will break down your constitution, and bring yourself to an earlier death than you would otherwise meet."

" I care very little, indeed, how soon I was dead—not makin' you, ma'am, an ill answer."

" Oh, fie, Connell, for you, a sensible man and a Christian to talk in such a manner ! "

" Throth, thin, I don't, ma'am. She's gone, an' I'd be glad to folly her as soon as I could. Yes, *asthore*, you're departed from me ! an' now I'm gone asthray—out o' the right, an' out o' the good ! Oh, ma'am," he proceeded, whilst the tears rolled fast down his cheeks, " if you knew her—her last words too—Oh, she was—she was—but where's the use o' sayin' what she was ?—I beg your pardon, ma'am—your honour, sir, 'll forgive my want o' manners ; sure, I know it's bad breedin', but I can't help it."

" Well, promise," said his landlord, " to give up drink. Indeed, I wish you would take an oath against it ; you are a conscientious man, and I know would

keep it, otherwise I should not propose it, for I discountenance such oaths generally. Will you promise me this, Connell ? "

" I'll promise to think of it, your honour—aginst takin' a sartin quantity, at any rate."

" If you refuse it, I'll think you are unmindful of the good feeling which we have ever shown your family."

" What ?—do you think, sir, I'm ungrateful to you ? That's a sore cut, sir, to make a villain o' me. Where's the book ?—I'll swear this minute. Have you a Bible, ma'am ?—I'll show you that I'm not mane, anyway."

" No, Connell, you shall not do it rashly ; you must be cool and composed ; but go home, and turn it in your mind," she replied, " and remember that it is the request of me and my husband for your own good."

" Neither must you swear before me," said his landlord, " but before Mr. Mulcahy, who, as it is an oath connected with your moral conduct, is the best person to be present. It must be voluntary, however. Now, good-bye, Connell, and think of what we said ; but take care never to carry home any of my servants in the same plight in which you put Smith to-day."

" Faix, thin, sir, he had no business, wid your honour's livery upon his back, to begin lecthurin' me agin dhrinkin' as he did. We may all do very well, sir, till the timptation crasses us—but that's what thries us. It thried him, but he didn't stand it—faix, he didn't ! —ha, ha, ha ! Good mornin', sir—God bless you, ma'am ! Divil resave the family in all Europe——"

" Good morning, Connell—good morning ! Pray remember what we said."

Peter, however, could not relinquish the whisky. His sons, daughters, friends, and neighbours all assailed him, but with no success. He either bantered them in his usual way, or reverted to his loss, and sank in sorrow. This last was the condition in which they found him most intractable ; for a man is never considered to be in a state that admits of reasoning or argument when he is known to be pressed by strong gushes of personal feeling. A plan at length struck Father Mulcahy, which he resolved to put into immediate execution.

" Peter," said he, " if you do not abandon drink, I shall stop the Masses which I'm offering up for the repose of your wife's soul, and I will also return you the money I received for sayin them."

This was perhaps the only point on which Peter was accessible. He felt staggered at such an unexpected intimation, and was for some time silent.

" You will then feel," added the priest, " that your drunkenness is prolonging the sufferings of your wife, and that she is as much concerned in your being sober as you are yourself."

" I will give in," replied Peter ; " I didn't see the thing in that light. No—I will not be drunk ; but if I swear aginst it, you must allow me a rasonable share every day, an' I'll not go beyant it, of coorse. The thruth is, I'd die soon if I gev it up altogether."

" We have certainly no objection against that," said the priest, " provided you keep within what would not injure your health or make you tipsy. Your drunkenness is not only sinful, but disreputable ; besides, you must not throw a slur upon the character of your children, who hold respectable and rising situations in the world."

"No," said Peter, in a kind of soliloquy, "I'd lay down my life, *avourneen*, sooner nor I'd cause you a minute's sufferin'. Father Mulcahy, go an wid the Masses. I'll get an oath drawn up, an' whin it's done, I'll swear to it. I know a man that'll do it for me."

The priest then departed, quite satisfied with having accomplished his object; and Peter, in the course of that evening, directed his steps to the house of the village schoolmaster, for the purpose of getting him to "draw up" the intended oath.

"Misther O'Flaherty," said he, "I'm comin' to ax a requist of you, an' I hope you'll grant it to me. I brought down a sup in this flask, an' while we're takin' it we can talk over what I want."

"If it be anything widin the circumference of my power, set it down, Misther Connell, as already operated upon. I'd drop a pen to no man at keepin' books by double enthry, which is the Italian method invinted by Pope Gregory the Great. The three sets bear a theological ratio to the three states of a thrue Christian. 'The waste-book,' says Pope Gregory, 'is this world, the journal is purgatory, an' the ledger is heaven. Or it may be compared,' he says, in the priface of the work, 'to the three states of the Catholic Church—the Church Militant, the Church Suffering, and the Church Triumphant.' The larnin' of that man was beyant the reach of credibility."

"*Arrah*, have you a small glass, masther? You see, Misther O'Flaherty, it's consarnin' purgatory, this that I want to talk about."

"Nancy, get a glass—oh, here it is! Thin, if it be, it's a wrong enthry in the journal."

"Here's your health, masther!—not forgettin' you,

Mrs. O'Flaherty. No, indeed, thin, it's not in the journal, but an oath I'm goin' to take aginst liquor."

"Nothin' is asier to post than it is. We must enther it undher the head of—let me see!—it must go in the spirit account, undher the head of Profit an' Loss. Your good health, Mr. Connell! Nancy, I drink to your improvement in imperturbability! Yes, it must be enthered undher the——"

"Faix, undher the rose, I think," observed Peter; "don't you know the smack of it? You see, since I tuck to it, I like the smell o' what I used to squeeze out o' the barley myself long ago. Misther O'Flaherty, I only want you to dhraw up an oath aginst liquor for me; but it's not for the books, good or bad. I promised to Father Mulcahy that I'd do it. It's regardin' my poor Ellish's sowl in purgatory."

"Nancy, hand me a slate an' cutter. Faith, the same's a provident resolution; but how is it an' purgatory concatenated?"

"The priest, you see, won't go an wid the Masses for her till I take the oath."

"That's but wake logic, if you ped him for thim."

"Faix, an' I did—an' well, too. But about the oath? Have you the pencil?"

"I have; jist lave the thing to me."

"Asy, masther—you don't undherstand it yit. Put down two tumblers for me at home."

"How is that, Mister Connell? It's mysterious if you're about to swear *aginst* liquor!"

"I am. Put down, as I said, two tumblers for me at home. Are they down?"

"They are down; but——"

"Asy!—very good! Put down two more for me at

Dan's. Let me see!—two more behind the garden. Well!—put down one at Father Mulcahy's; two more at Frank Carroll's, of Kilclay. How many's that?"

"Nine!!!"

"Very good! Now put down one wid ould Bartle Gorman, of Nurchasy; an' two over wid Michael Morris, of Cargah. How many have you now?"

"Twelve in all!!!! But, Misther Connell, there's a demonstration badly wanted here: I must confiss I was always bright, but at present I'm as dark as Nox. I'd thank you for a taste of explanation."

"Asy, man alive! Is there twelve in all?"

"Twelve in all; I've calculated them."

"Well, we'll hould to that. Och, och!—I'm sure, *avourneen*, afore I'd let you suffer one minute's pain, I'd not scruple to take an oath aginst liquor, anyway. He may go an wid the Masses now for you, as soon as he likes! Mr. O'Flaherty, will you put that down on paper, an' I'll swear to it, wid a blessin', to-morrow."

"But what object do you wish to effectuate by this?"

"You see, masther, I dhrink one day wid another from a score to two dozen tumblers, an' I want to swear to no more nor twelve in twenty-four hours."

"Why, there's intelligibility in that! Wid great pleasure, Mr. Connell, I'll indite it. Katty, tear me a lafe out o' Brian Murphy's copy there."

"You see, masther, it's for Ellish's sake I'm doin' this. State that in the oath."

"I know it; an' well she desarved that specimen of abstinence from you, Misther Connell. Thank you!—your health agin! an' God grant you grace and fortitude to go through wid the same oath!—an' so He will, or I'm grievously mistaken in you."

"*OATH AGAINST LIQUOR*

made by me, Cornelius O'Flaherty, Philomath, on behalf of Misther Pether O'Connell, of the Cross-roads, Merchant, on one part—and of the soul of Mrs. Ellish O'Connell, now in purgatory, Merchantess, on the other.

"I solemnly, and meritoriously, and soberly swear that a single tumbler of whisky punch shall not cross my lips during the twenty-four hours of the day, barring twelve, the locality of which is as followeth :—

Imprimis—Two tumblers at home	2
Secundo—Two more ditto at my son Dan's	2
Tertio—Two more ditto behind my own garden... ...	2
Quarto—One ditto at the Reverend Father Mulcahy's ...	1
Quinto—Two more ditto at Frank Carroll's, of Kilclay...	2
Sexto—One ditto wid ould Bartle Gorman, of Nurchasy	1
Septimo—Two more ditto wid Michael Morris ,of Cargah	2
	12

"*N.B.*—I except in case any Docthor of Physic might think it right and medical to ordher me more for my health ; or in case I could get Father Mulcahy to take the oath off me for a start at a wedding or a christening, or at any other meeting of friends where there's drink.

his

"Witness present, "PETHER X O'CONNELL.
"CORNELIUS O'FLAHERTY, Philomath. mark.
"*June the 4th*, 18—.

"☞I certify that I have made and calculated this oath for Misther Pether O'Connell, Merchant, and that it is strictly and arithmetically proper and correct.

"CORNELIUS O'FLAHERTY, Philomath.

"*Dated this 4th day of June*, 18—."

"I think, Misther O'Flaherty, it's a dacent oath as it stands. Plase God, I'll swear to it some time to-morrow evenin'."

"Dacent! Why, I don't wish to become eulogistically addicted, but I'd back the same oath, for both grammar and arithmetic, aginst any that ever was drawn up by a lawyer—ay, by Counsellor O'Connell* himself!

* Daniel O,Connell was first known to the people as a successful lawyer.—ED.

—but, faith, I'd not face him at a vow, for all that ; he's the greatest man at a vow in the three kingdoms."

" I'll tell you what I'm thinkin', masther—as my hand's in, mightn't I as well take another wid an ould frind o' mine, Andy Cavanagh, of Lisbuy ? He's a dacent ould residenther, an' likes it. It'll make the baker's or the long dozen."

" Why, it's not a bad thought ; but won't thirteen get into your head ? "

" No, nor three more to the back o' that. I only begin to get hearty about seventeen ; so that the long dozen, afther all, is best ; for God He knows I've a regard for Andy Cavanagh this many a year, an' I wouldn't wish to lave him out."

" Very well—I'll add it up to the other part of the oath.

Octavo—One ditto out of respect for dacent Andy Cavanagh, of Lisbuy 1

Now I must make the total amount thirteen, an' all will be right."

" Masther, have you a prayer-book widin ? Bekase if you have, I may as well swear it here, an' you can witness it."

" Katty, hand over the Spiritual Exercises—a book aquil to the Bible itself for piety an' devotion."

" Sure, they say, masther, any book that the name o' God's in is good for an oath. Now, wid the help o' goodness, repate the words afore me, an' I'll swear thim."

O'Flaherty hemmed two or three times, and complied with Peter's wishes, who followed him in the words until the oath was concluded. He then kissed the book, and expressed himself much at ease, as well, he said, upon the account of Ellish's soul, as for the sake of his children.

For some time after this his oath was the standing jest of the neighbourhood : even to this day Peter Connell's oath against liquor is a proverb in that part of the country. Immediately after he had sworn, no one could ever perceive that he violated it in the slightest degree ; but there could be no doubt as to his literally fulfilling it. A day never passed in which he did not punctually pay a friendly visit to those whose names were dotted down, with whom he sat, pulled out his flask, and drank his quantum. In the meantime, the poor man was breaking down rapidly ; so much so that his appearance generally excited pity, if not sorrow, among his neighbours. His character became simpler every day, and his intellect evidently more exhausted. The inoffensive humour, for which he had been noted, was also completely on the wane ; his eye was dim, his step feeble, but the benevolence of his heart never failed him. Many acts of his private generosity are well known, and still remembered with gratitude.

In proportion as the strength of his mind and constitution diminished, so did his capacity for bearing liquor. When he first bound himself by the oath not to exceed the long dozen, such was his vigour that the effects of thirteen tumblers could scarcely be perceived on him. This state of health, however, did not last. As he wore away, the influence of so much liquor was becoming stronger, until at length he found that it was more than he could bear, that he frequently confounded the names of the men and the number of tumblers in the oath, and sometimes took, in his route, persons and places not to be found in it at all. This grieved him, and he resolved to wait upon O'Flaherty, for the purpose of having some means devised of guiding him during his potations.

"Masther," said he, "we must thry an' make this oath somethin' plainer. You see, whin I get confused, I'm not able to remimber things as I ought. Sometimes, instid o' one tumbler, I take two at the wrong place; an' sarra bit o' me but called in an' had three wid ould Jack Rogers, that isn't in it at all. On another day I had a couple wid honest Barny Casey, an my way acrass to Bartle Gorman's. I'm not what I was, masther, *ahagur;* so I'd thank you to dhraw it out more clearer, if you can, nor it was."

"I see, Mr. Connell; I comprehend, wid the greatest ase in life, the very plan for it. We must reduce the oath to Geography, for I'm at home there, bein' a surveyor* myself. I'll lay down a map o' the parish, an' dhraw the houses of your friends at their proper places, so that you'll never be out o' your latitude at all."

"Faix, I doubt that, masther—ha, ha, ha!" replied Peter. "I'm afeard I will, of an odd time, for I'm not able to carry what I used to do; but, no matther—thry what you can do for me this time, anyhow. I think I could bear the long dozen still, if I didn't make mistakes."

O'Flaherty accordingly set himself to work; and as his knowledge, not only of the parish, but of every person and house in it, was accurate, he soon had a tolerably correct skeleton map of it drawn for Peter's use.

"Now," said he, "lend me your ears."

"Faix, I'll do no sich thing," replied Peter—"I know a thrick worth two of it. Lend you my ears, *inagh!*—catch me at it! You have a bigger pair of your own nor I have—ha, ha, ha!"

* The hedge schoolmasters, as readers of "The Hedge School" may recollect, were often employed as surveyors.

" Well, in other words, pay attintion. Now, see this dot—that's your own house."

" Put a crass there," said Peter, " an' thin I'll know it's the crass-roads."

" Upon my reputation, you're right ; an' that's what I call a good specimen of ingenuity. I'll take the hint from that, an' we'll make it a hieroglyphical as well as a geographical oath. Well, there's a crass, wid two tumblers. Is that clear ? "

" It is, it is ! Go an."

" Now here we draw a line to your son Dan's. Let me see—he keeps a mill. an' sells cloth. Very good. I'll draw a mill-wheel an' a yard-wand. There's two tumblers. Will you know that ? "

" I see it—go an—nothin' can be clearer. So far I can't go asthray."

" Well, what next ? Two behind your own garden. What metaphor for the garden ? Let me see—let me cogitate ! A dragon—the Hesperides ! That's beyant you. A bit of a hedge will do, an' a gate."

" Don't put a gate in, it's not lucky. You know when a man takes to dhrink, they say he's goin' a grey gate, or black gate, or a bad gate. Put that out, an' make the hedge longer, an' it'll do—wid the two tumblers, though."

" They're down. One at the Reverend Father Mulcahy's. How will we thranslate the priest ? "

" Faix, I doubt that will be a difficquilt business."

" Upon my reputation, I agree wid you in that, especially whin he repates Latin. However, we'll see. He writes P.P. afther his name—pee-pee is what we call the turkeys wid. What ud you think o' two turkeys ? "

" The priest would like them roasted, but I couldn't undherstand that. No—put down the sign o' the horse-

whip or the cudgel ; for he's handy an' argues well wid both ! "

" Good ! I'll put down the horsewhip first and the cudgel alongside of it, then the tumbler ; an' there 'ill be the sign o' the priest."

" Ay, do, masther, an' faix the priest 'ill be complate —there can be no mistakin' him thin. Divil a one but that's a good thought ! "

" There it is in black an' white. Who comes next ? Frank Carroll. He's a farmer. I'll put down a spade an' a harrow. Well, that's done—two tumblers."

" I won't mistake that aither ; it's clear enough."

" Bartle Gorman's, of Nurchasy. Bartle's a little lame, an' uses a staff wid a cross on the end that he houlds in his hand. I'll put down a staff wid a cross on it."

" Would there be no danger of me mistakin' that for the priest's cudgel ? "

" Not the slightest. I'll pledge my knowledge of geography they're two very different weapons."

" Well, put it down—I'll know it."

" Michael Morris, of Cargah. What for him ? Michael's a pig-driver. I'll put down a pig. You'll comprehend that ? "

" I ought ; for many a pig I sould him in my day. Put down the pig ; an' if you could put two black spots upon his back, I'd know it to be one I sould him about four years agone—the fattest ever was in the country—it had to be brought home on a car, for it wasn't able to walk wid fat."

" Very good—the spots are on it. The last is Andy Cavanagh, of Lisbuy. Now, do you see that I've drawn

a line from place to place, so that you have nothing to do only to keep to it as you go. What for Andy ? "

" Andy ! Let me see—Andy ! Pooh ! What's come over me that I've nothing for Andy ? Ay ! I have it. He's a horse-jockey—put down a grey mare I sould him about five years agone."

" I'll put down a horse ; but I can't make a grey mare wid black ink."

" Well, make a mare of her, anyway."

" Faith, an' that same puzzles me. Stop, I have it—I'll put a foal along wid her."

" As good as the bank. God bless you, Misther O'Flaherty. I think this'll keep me from mistakes. An' now, if you'll slip up to me afther dusk, I'll send you down a couple of bottles and a flitch. Sure, you desarve more for the throuble you tuck."*

Peter had, however, overrated his own strength in supposing that he could bear the long dozen in future ; ere many months passed he was scarcely able to reach the half of that number without sinking into intoxication. Whilst in this state he was in the habit of going to the graveyard in which his wife lay buried, where he sat and wept like a child, sang her favourite songs, or knelt and offered up his prayers for the repose of her soul. None ever mocked him for this ; on the contrary, there was always some kind person to assist him home. And, as he staggered on, instead of sneers and ridicule, one might hear such expressions as these :—

" Poor Pether ! he's nearly off ; an' a dacent, kind

*Many of my English readers will be somewhat startled to hear that, except the change of names and places, there is actually little exaggeration in the form of this oath ; so just is the observation that the romance of truth frequently far exceeds that of fiction.

neighbour he ever was. The death of the wife broke his heart—he never ris his head since."

"Ay, poor man! God pity him! He'll soon be sleepin' beside her, beyant there, where she's lyin'. It was never known of Pether Connell that he offinded man, woman, or child since he was born, barrin' the gaugers, bad luck to thim, afore he was marrid—but that was no offince. Sowl, he was their match, anyhow. When he an' the wife's gone, they won't lave their likes behind them. The sons are *bodaghs*—gintlemen, now; an' it's nothin' but dinners an' company. *Ahagur*, that wasn't the way their hard-workin' father an' mother made the money that they're houldin' their heads up wid such consequence upon."

The children, however, did not give Peter up as hopeless. Father Mulcahy, too, once more assailed him on his weak side. One morning, when he was sober, nervous, and depressed, the priest arrived, and finding him at home, addressed him as follows:—

"Peter, I'm sorry, and vexed, and angry this morning; and you are the cause of it."

"How is that, your reverence?" said Peter. "God help me," he added, "don't be hard an me, sir, for I'm to be pitied. Don't be hard an me for the short time I'll be here. I know it won't be long—I'll be wid her soon. *Asthore machree*, we'll be together, I hope, afore long—an' oh! if it was the will o' God, I would be glad it was afore night!"

The poor, shattered, heart-broken creature wept bitterly; for he felt somewhat sensible of the justice of the reproof which he expected from the priest, as well as undiminished sorrow for his wife.

"I'm not going to be hard on you," said the good-

natured priest; "I only called to tell you a dream that your son Dan had last night about you and his mother."

"About Ellish! Oh, for heaven's sake, what about her, father, *avourneen?*"

"She appeared to him last night," replied Father Mulcahy, "and told him that your drinking kept her out of happiness."

"Queen of Heaven!" exclaimed Peter, deeply affected, "is that true? Oh," said he, dropping on his knees, "father, *ahagur machree*, pardon me—oh, forgive me! I now promise, solemnly and seriously, to drink neither in the house nor out of it, for the time to come, not one drop at all, good, bad, or indifferent, of either whisky, wine, or punch—barrin' one glass. Are you now satisfied? An' do you think she'll get to happiness?"

"All will be well, I trust," said the priest. "I shall mention this to Dan and the rest, and, depend upon it, they, too, will be happy to hear it."

"Here's what Mr. O'Flaherty an' myself made up," said Peter; "burn it, father—take it out of my sight, for it's now no use to me."

"What is this at all?" said Mr. Mulcahy, looking into it. "Is it an oath?"

"It's the joggraphy of one I swore some time ago; but it's now out of date—I'm done wid it."

The priest could not avoid smiling when he perused it; and on getting from Peter's lips an explanation of the hieroglyphics, he laughed heartily at the ingenious shifts they had made to guide his memory.

Peter, for some time after this, confined himself to one glass, as he had promised; but he felt such depression and feebleness that he ventured slowly, and by

degrees, to enlarge the "glass" from which he drank. His impression touching the happiness of his wife was that, as he had for several months strictly observed his promise, she had probably during that period gone to heaven. He then began to exercise his ingenuity gradually, as we have said, by using, from time to time, a glass larger than the preceding one; thus receding from the spirit of his vow to the letter, and increasing the quantity of his drink from a small glass to the most capacious tumbler he could find. The manner in which he drank this was highly illustrative of the customs which prevail on this subject in Ireland. He remembered that in making the vow he used the words, "neither in the house nor out of it"; but, in order to get over this dilemma, he usually stood with one foot outside the threshold and the other in the house, keeping himself in that position which would render it difficult to determine whether he was either out or in. At other times, when he happened to be upstairs, he usually thrust one-half of his person out of the window, with the same ludicrous intention of keeping the letter of his vow.

Many a smile this adroitness of his occasioned to the lookers-on; but further ridicule was checked by his woe-begone and afflicted look. He was now a mere skeleton, feeble and tottering.

One night, in the depth of winter, he went into the town where his two sons resided; he had been ill in mind and body during the day, and he fancied that change of scene and society might benefit him. His daughter and son-in-law, in consequence of his illness, watched him so closely that he could not succeed in getting his usual "glass." This offended him, and he

escaped without their knowledge to the son who kept the inn. On arriving there, he went upstairs, and, by a *douceur* to the waiter, got a large tumbler filled with spirits. The lingering influences of a conscience that generally felt strongly on the side of moral duty, though poorly instructed, prompted him to drink it in the usual manner, by keeping one-half of his body, as nearly as he could guess, out of the window, that it might be said he drank it neither in nor out of the house. He had scarcely finished his draught, however, when he lost his balance, and was precipitated upon the pavement. The crash of his fall was heard in the bar, and his son, who had just come in, ran, along with several others, to ascertain what had happened. They found him, however, only severely stunned. He was immediately brought in, and medical aid sent for; but, though he recovered from the immediate effects of the fall, the shock it gave to his broken constitution, and his excessive grief, carried him off a few months afterwards. He expired in the arms of his son and daughter, and amidst the tears of those who knew his simplicity of character, his goodness of heart, and his attachment to the wife by whose death that heart had been broken.

Such was the melancholy end of the honest and warm-hearted Peter Connell, who, unhappily, was not a solitary instance of a man driven to habits of intoxication and neglect of business by the force of sorrow, which time and a well-regulated mind might otherwise have overcome. We have held him up, on the one hand, as an example worthy of imitation in that industry and steadiness which, under the direction of his wife, raised him from poverty to independence and wealth; and, on the other, as a man resorting to the use of spirituous

liquors that he might be enabled to support affliction —a course which, so far from having sustained him under it, shattered his constitution, shortened his life, and destroyed his happiness. In conclusion, we wish our countrymen of Peter's class would imitate him in his better qualities, and try to avoid his failings.

BOB PENTLAND, OR THE GAUGER OUTWITTED.

THAT the Irish are a ready-witted people is a fact to the truth of which testimony has been amply borne both by their friends and enemies. Many causes might be brought forward to account for this questionable gift, if it were our intention to be philosophical; but, as the matter has been so generally conceded, it would be but a waste of logic to prove to the world that which the world cares not about, beyond the mere fact that it is so. On this or any other topic one illustration is worth twenty arguments, and, accordingly, instead of broaching a theory we shall relate a story.

Behind the hill, or rather mountain, of Altnaveenan lies one of those deep and almost precipitous valleys, on which the practised eye of an illicit distiller would dwell with delight, as a topography not likely to be invaded by the unhallowed feet of the gauger and his red-coats. In point of fact, the spot we speak of was, from its peculiarly isolated position, nearly invisible, unless to such as came very close to it. Being so completely hemmed in and concealed by the round and angular projections of the mountain hills, you could never dream of its existence at all, until you came upon the very verge of the little precipitous gorge which led

into it. This advantage of position was not, however, its only one. It is true, indeed, that the moment you had entered it, all possibility of its being applied to the purposes of distillation at once vanished, and you consequently could not help exclaiming, "what a pity that so safe and beautiful a nook should not have a single spot on which to erect a still-house, or rather on which to raise a sufficient stream of water to the elevation necessary for the process of distilling." If a gauger actually came to the little chasm, and cast his scrutinizing eye over it, he would immediately perceive that the erection of a private still in such a place was a piece of folly not generally to be found in the plans of those who have recourse to such practices.

This absence, however, of the requisite conveniences was only apparent, not real. To the right, about one hundred yards above the entrance to it, ran a ledge of rocks, some fifty feet high or so. Along the lower brows, near the ground, grew thick matted masses of long heath, which covered the entrance to a cave about as large and as high as an ordinary farm-house. Through a series of small fissures in the rocks which formed its roof descended a stream of clear, soft water, precisely in body and volume such as was actually required by the distiller; but, unless by lifting up this mass of heath, no human being could for a moment imagine that there existed any such grotto, or so unexpected and easy an entrance to it. Here there was a private still-house made by the hand of nature herself, such as no art or ingenuity of man could equal.

Now it so happened that about the period we write of, there lived in our parish two individuals so antithetical to each other in their pursuits of life, that we

question whether throughout all the instinctive antipathies of nature we could find any two animals more destructive of each other than the two we mean—to wit, Bob Pentland, the gauger, and little George Steen, the illicit distiller. Pentland was an old, staunch, well-trained fellow, of about fifty years or more, steady and sure, and with all the characteristic points of the high-bred gauger about him. He was a tallish man, thin, but lathy, with a hooked nose that could scent the tread of a distiller with the keenness of a sleuth-hound ; his dark eye was deep-set, circumspect, and roguish in its expression, and his shaggy brow seemed always to be engaged in calculating whereabouts his inveterate foe, little George Steen, that eternally blinked him when almost in his very fangs, might then be distilling. To be brief, Pentland was proverbial for his sagacity and adroitness in detecting distillers, and little George was equally proverbial for having always baffled him, and that, too, sometimes under circumstances where escape seemed hopeless.

The incidents which we are about to detail occurred at that period of time when the collective wisdom of our legislators thought it advisable to impose a fine upon the whole townland in which the Still, Head, and Worm might be found ; thus opening a door for knavery and fraud, and, as it proved in most cases, rendering the innocent as liable to suffer for an offence they never contemplated as the guilty who planned and perpetrated it. The consequence of such a law was, that still-houses were always certain to be erected either at the very verge of the neighbouring districts, or as near them as the circumstances of convenience and situation would permit. The moment, of course, that the hue-and-cry of the

gauger and his myrmidons was heard upon the wind, the whole apparatus was immediately heaved over the *mering* to the next townland, from which the fine imposed by Parliament was necessarily raised, whilst the crafty and offending district actually escaped. The state of society generated by such a blundering and barbarous statute as this was dreadful. In the course of a short time, reprisals, lawsuits, battles, murders, and massacres multiplied to such an extent throughout the whole country, that the sapient senators, who occasioned such commotion, were compelled to repeal their own act as soon as they found how it worked. Necessity, together with being the mother of invention, is also the cause of many an accidental discovery. Pentland had been so frequently defeated by little George, that he vowed never to rest until he had secured him; and George, on the other hand, frequently told him—for they were otherwise on the best terms—that he defied him, or, as he himself more quaintly expressed it, "that he defied the devil, the world, and Bob Pentland." The latter, however, was a very sore thorn in his side, and drove him from place to place, and from one haunt to another, until he began to despair of being able any longer to outwit him, or to find within the parish any spot at all suitable to distillation with which Pentland was not acquainted. In this state stood matters between them, when George fortunately discovered at the hip of Altnaveenan hill the natural grotto we have just sketched so briefly. Now, George was a man, as we have already hinted, of great fertility of resources; but there existed in the same parish another distiller who outstripped him in that far-sighted cunning which is so necessary in misleading or circumventing

such a sharp-scented old hound as Pentland. This was little Mickey M'Quade, a short-necked, squat, little fellow, with bow legs, who might be said rather to creep in his motion than to walk. George and Mickey were intimate friends, independently of their joint antipathy against the gauger, and, truth to tell, much of the mortification and many of the defeats which Pentland experienced at George's hands were, *sub rosa*, to be attributed to Mickey. George was a distiller from none of the motives which generally actuate others of that class. He was in truth an analytic philosopher—a natural chemist never out of some new experiment—and we have reason to think might have been the Kane, or Faraday, or Dalton, of his day, had he only received a scientific education. Not so honest Mickey, who never troubled his head about an experiment, but only thought of making a good running, and defeating the gauger. The first thing, of course, that George did was to consult Mickey, and both accordingly took a walk up to the scene of their future operations. On examining it, and fully perceiving its advantages, it might well be said that the look of exultation and triumph which passed between them was not unworthy of their respective characters.

"This will do," said George. "Eh—don't you think we'll put our finger in Pentland's eye yet?" Mickey spat sagacicusly over his beard, and after a second glance gave one grave grin which spoke volumes. "It'll do," said he; "but there's one point to be got over that maybe you didn't think of; an' you know that half a blink, half a point, is enough for Pentland."

"What is it?"

"What do you intend to do with the smoke when

the fire's lit ? There'll be no keepin' *that* down. Let Pentland see but as much smoke risin' as would come out of an ould woman's dudeen, an' he'd have us."

George started, and it was clear by the vexation and disappointment which were visible on his brow that unless this untoward circumstance could be managed their whole plan was deranged, and the cave of no value.

" What's to be done ? " he inquired of his cooler companion. " If we can't get over this, we may bid good-bye to it."

" Never mind," said Mickey ; " I'll manage it, and *do* Pentland still."

" Ay, but how ? "

" It's no matter. Let us not lose a minute in settin' to work. Lave the other thing to me ; an' if I don't account for the smoke without discoverin' the entrance to the still, I'll give you lave to crop the ears off my head."

George knew the cool but steady self-confidence for which Mickey was remarkable, and, accordingly, without any further interrogatory, they both proceeded to follow up their plan of operations.

In those times when distillation might be truly considered as almost universal, it was customary for farmers to build their out-houses with secret chambers and other requisite partitions necessary for carrying it on. Several of them had private stores built between false walls, the entrance to which was only known to a few, and many of them had what were called *Malt-steeps* sunk in hidden recesses and hollow gables, for the purpose of steeping the barley, and afterwards of turning and airing it, until it was sufficiently hard to be kiln-dried and ground. From the mill it was usually conveyed to the still-house upon what were termed *Slipes*, a kind of car that was made

without wheels, in order the more easily to pass through morasses and bogs which no wheeled vehicle could encounter.

In the course of a month or so, George and Mickey, aided by their friends, had all the apparatus of keeve, hogshead, etc., together with Still, Head, and Worm, set up and in full work.

"And now, Mickey," inquired his companion, "how will you manage about the smoke? for you know that the two worst informers against a private distiller, barrin' a *stag*, is a smoke by day an' a fire by night."

"I know that," replied Mickey; "an' a rousin' smoke we'll have for 'fraid a little puff wouldn't do us. Come, now, an' I'll show you."

They both ascended to the top, where Mickey had closed all the open fissures of the roof with the exception of that which was directly over the fire of the still. This was at best not more than six inches in breadth, and about twelve long. Over it he placed a piece of strong plate-iron perforated with holes, and on this he had a fire of turf, beside which sat a little boy who acted as a vidette. The thing was simple but effective. Clamps of turf were at every side of them, and the boy was instructed, if the gauger, whom he well knew, ever appeared, to heap on fresh fuel, so as to increase the smoke in such a manner as to induce him to suppose that *all* he saw of it proceeded merely from the fire before him. In fact, smoke from the cave below was so completely identified with and lost in that which was emitted from the fire above, that no human being could penetrate the mystery, if not made previously acquainted with it. The writer of this saw it during the hottest process of distillation, and failed to make the

discovery, although told that the still-house was within a circle of three hundred yards, the point he stood on being considered the centre. On more than one occasion has he absconded from home, and spent a whole night in the place, seized with that indescribable fascination which such a scene holds forth to youngsters, as well as from his irrepressible anxiety to hear the old stories and legends with the recital of which they generally pass the night.

In this way, well provided against the gauger—indeed, much better than our readers are yet aware of, as they shall understand by-and-bye—did George, Mickey, and their friends proceed for the greater part of a winter without a single visit from Pentland. Several successful runnings had come off, which had, of course, turned out highly profitable, and they were just now preparing to commence their last, not only for the season, but the last they should ever work together, as George was making preparations to go early in the spring to America. Even this running was going on to their satisfaction, and the singlings had been thrown again into the still, from the worm of which projected the strong medicinal *first-shot* as the doubling commenced—this last term meaning the spirit in its pure and finished state. On this occasion the two worthies were more than ordinarily anxious, and certainly doubled their usual precautions against a surprise, for they knew that Pentland's visits resembled the pounces of a hawk or the springs of a tiger more than anything else to which they could compare them. In this they were not disappointed. When the doubling was about half finished he made his appearance, attended by a strong party of reluctant soldiers—for, indeed, it is due to the military to state that they never took delight in harassing the

country people at the command of a keg-hunter, as they generally nicknamed the gauger. It had been arranged that the vidette at the iron plate should whistle a particular tune the moment that the gauger or a red-coat, or, in fact, any person whom he did not know, should appear. Accordingly, about eight o'clock in the morning they heard the little fellow in his highest key whistling up that well-known and very significant old Irish air called "Go to the devil and shake yourself"—which in this case was applied to the gauger in anything but an allegorical sense.

"Be the pins," which was George's usual oath—"be the pins, Mickey, it's over with us—Pentland's here, for there's the sign."

Mickey paused for a moment and listened very gravely; then squirting out a tobacco spittle, "Take it easy," said he; "I have half-a-dozen fires about the hills, any one as like this as your right hand is to your left. I didn't spare trouble, for I knew that if we'd get over *this* day, we'd be out of his power."

"Well, my good lad," said Pentland, addressing the vidette, "what's this fire for?"

"What is it for, is it?"

"Yes; if you don't let me know instantly I'll blow your brains out, and get you hanged and transported afterwards."

This he said with a thundering voice, cocking a large horse pistol at the same time.

"Why, sir," said the boy, "it's watchin' a still I am; but be the hole o' my coat if you tell upon me, it's broilin' upon these coals I'll be soon."

"Where is the still, then? An' the still-house, where is it?"

"Oh, begorra, as to where the still or still-house is, they wouldn't tell *me* that."

"Why, sirra, didn't you say this moment you were watching a still?"

"I meant, sir," replied the lad, with a face that spoke of pure idiocy, "that it was the gauger I was watchin', an' I was to whistle upon my fingers to let the boy at that fire on the hill there above know he was comin'."

"Who told you to do so?"

"Little George, sir, an' Mickey M'Quade."

"Ay, ay, right enough there, my lad—two of the most notorious schemers unhanged, they are both. But now, like a good boy, tell me the truth, an' I'll give you the price of a pair of shoes. Do you know where the still or still-house is? Because, if you do, an' won't tell me, here are the soldiers at hand to make a prisoner of you; an' if they do, all the world can't prevent you from being hanged, drawn and quartered."

"Oh, bad cess may seize the morsel o' me knows that; but, if you'll give me the money, sir, I'll tell you who can bring you to it, for he tould me yestherday mornin' that he knew, an' offered to bring me there last night, if I'd steal him a bottle that my mother keeps the holy water in at home, tal he'd put whiskey in it."

"Well, my lad, who is this boy?"

"Do you know 'Harry Neil, or Mankind,' sir?"

"I do, my good boy."

"Well, it's a son of his, sir; an, look, sir; do you see the smoke farthest up to the right, sir?"

"To the right? Yes."

"Well, 'tis there, sir, that Darby Neil is watchin'; and he *says* he knows."

"How long have you been watching here?"

"This is only the third day, sir, for *me*, but the rest, them boys above, has been here a good while."

"Have you seen nobody stirring about the hills since you came?"

"Only once, sir, yesterday, I seen two men, havin' an empty sack or two, runnin' across the hill there above."

At this moment the military came up, for he had himself ran forward in advance of them, and he repeated the substance of his conversation with our friend the vidette. Upon examining the stolidity of his countenance, in which there certainly was a woeful deficiency of meaning, they agreed among themselves that his appearance justified the truth of the story which he told the gauger, and upon being still further interrogated, they were confirmed that none but a stupid lout like himself would entrust to his keeping any secret worth knowing. They now separated themselves into as many detached parties as there were fires burning on the hills about them, the gauger himself resolving to make for that which Darby Neil had in his keeping, for he could not help thinking that the vidette's story was too natural to be false. They were just in the act of separating themselves to pursue their different routes when the lad said:—

"Look, sir! look, sir! bad scran be from me but there's a still, anyway. Sure I often seen a still: that's just like the one that Philip Hagan, the tinker, mended in George Steen's barn."

"Hollo, boys," exclaimed, Pentland, "stoop! stoop! they are coming this way, and don't see us: no, hang them, no! they have discovered us now, and are off

towards Mossfield. By Jove, this will be a bitter trick if they succeed; confound them, they are bent for Ballagh, which is my own property; and may I be hanged, but if we do not intercept them it is I myself who will have to pay the fine."

The pursuit instantly commenced with a speed and vigour equal to the ingenuity of this singular act of retaliation on the gauger. Pentland himself being long-winded from much practice in this way, and being further stimulated by the prospective loss which he dreaded, made as beautiful a run of it as any man of his years could do. It was all in vain, however. He merely got far enough to see the Still, Head, and Worm, heaved across the march ditch into his own property, and to reflect after seeing it, that he was certain to have the double consolation of being made a standing joke of for life, and of paying heavily for the jest out of his own pocket. In the meantime, he was bound, of course, to seize the still, and report the caption; and as he himself farmed the townland in question, the fine was levied to the last shilling, upon the very natural principle that if he had been sufficiently active and vigilant, no man would have attempted to set up a still so convenient to his own residence and property.

This manœuvre of keeping in reserve an old or second set of apparatus, for the purpose of acting the lapwing and misleading the gauger, was afterwards often practised with success; but the first discoverer of it was undoubtedly Mickey M'Quade, although the honour of the discovery was attributed to his friend George Steen. The matter, however, did not actually end here, for in a few days afterwards some malicious wag—in other words, George himself—had correct information sent

to Pentland touching the locality of the cavern and the secret of its entrance. On this occasion the latter brought a larger military party than usual along with him, but it was only to make him feel that he stood in a position, if possible, still more ridiculous than the first. He found, indeed, the marks of recent distillation in the place, but nothing else. Every vessel and implement connected with the process had been removed, with the exception of one bottle of whisky, to which was attached, by a bit of twine, the following friendly note :—

"MR. PENTLAND, SIR—Take this bottle home and drink your own health. You can't do less. It was distilled *under your nose*, the first day you came to look for us, and bottled for you while you were speaking to the little boy that made a hare of you. Being distilled, then, under your nose, let it be drunk in the same place, and don't forget while doing so to drink the health of

"G. S."

The incident went abroad like wildfire, and was known everywhere. Indeed, for a long time it was the standing topic of the parish ; and so sharply was it felt by Pentland that he could never keep his temper if asked. "Mr. Pentland, when did you see little George Steen ?" —a question to which he was never known to give a civil reply.

THE PARTY FIGHT AND FUNERAL.

It has long been laid down as a universal principle that self-preservation is the first law of nature. An Irishman, however, has nothing to do with this; he disposes of it as he does of the other laws, and washes his hands out of it altogether. But commend him to a fair, dance, funeral, or wedding, or to any other sport where there is a likelihood of getting his head or his bones broken, and if he survive he will remember you, with a kindness peculiar to himself, to the last day of his life; will drub you from head to heel if he finds that any misfortune has kept you out of a row beyond the usual period of three months; will render the same service to any of your friends that stand in need of it; or, in short, will go to the world's end, or fifty miles farther, as he himself would say, to serve you, provided you can procure him a bit of decent fighting. Now, in truth and soberness, it is difficult to account for this propensity, especially when the task of ascertaining it is assigned to those of another country, or even to those Irishmen whose rank in life places them too far from the customs, prejudices, and domestic opinions of their native peasantry—none of which can be properly known without mingling with them. To my own knowledge, however, it proceeds from education. And here I would beg leave to point

out an omission of which the several boards of education have been guilty, and which, I believe, no one but myself has yet been sufficiently acute and philosophical to ascertain, as forming a *sine quâ non* in the national instruction of the lower orders of Irishmen.

The cream of the matter is this. A species of ambition prevails in the Green Isle not known in any other country. It is an ambition of about three miles by four in extent—or, in other words, is bounded by the limits of the parish in which the subject of it may reside. It puts itself forth early in the character, and a hardy perennial it is. In my own case its first development was noticed in the hedge-school which I attended. I had not been long there till I was forced to declare myself either for the Caseys or the Murphys, two tiny factions that had split the school between them. The day on which the ceremony of my declaration took place was a solemn one. After school, we all went to the bottom of a deep valley, a short distance from the schoolhouse. Up to the moment of our assembling there I had not taken my stand under either banner—that of the Caseys was a sod of turf stuck on the end of a broken fishing-rod ; the eagle of the Murphys was a cork-red potato hoisted in the same manner. The turf was borne by an urchin who afterwards distinguished himself at fairs and markets as a *builla battha* of the first grade, and from this circumstance he was nick-named *Parrah Rackhan*.* The potato was borne by little Mickle M'Phaudeen Murphy, who afterwards took away Katty Bane Sheridan without asking her own consent or her father's. They were all then boys, it is true, but they gave a tolerable promise of that eminence which they subsequently attained.

* Paddy Riot (or the Rioter).

When we arrived at the bottom of the glen, the Murphys and the Caseys, including their respective followers, ranged themselves on either side of a long line which was drawn between the belligerent powers, with the butt-end of one of the standards. Exactly on this line was I placed. The word was then put to me in full form—"Whether will you side with the dacent Caseys or the blackguard Murphys?" "Whether will you side with the dacent Murphys or the blackguard Caseys?" "The "potato for ever!" said I, throwing up my *caubeen*, and running over to the Murphy standard. In the twinkling of an eye we were at it; and in a short time the deuce an eye some of us had to twinkle. A battle-royal succeeded that lasted near half an hour, and it would probably have lasted about double the time were it not for the appearance of the "master," who was seen by a little shrivelled *vidette*, who wanted an arm, and could take no part in the engagement. This was enough; we instantly radiated in all possible directions, so that by the time he had descended through the intricacies of the glen to the field of battle, neither victor nor vanquished was visible, except, perhaps, a straggler or two as they topped the brow of the declivity, looking back over their shoulders to put themselves out of doubt as to their visibility by the master. They seldom looked in vain, however; for there he usually stood, shaking up his rod, silently prophetic of its application on the following day. This threat, for the most part, ended in smoke; for, except he horsed about forty or fifty of us, the infliction of impartial justice was utterly out of his power.

But, besides this, there never was a realm in which the evils of a divided cabinet were more visible: the truth

is, the monarch himself was under the influence of female government—an influence which he felt it either contrary to his inclination or beyond his power to throw off. "Poor Norah, long may you reign," we often used to exclaim, to the visible mortification of the "master," who felt the benevolence of the wish bottomed upon an indirect want of allegiance to himself. Well, it was a touching scene—how we used to stand with the waistbands of our small-clothes cautiously grasped in our hands, with a timid show of resistance, our brave red faces slobbered over with tears, as we stood naked for execution! Never was there a finer specimen of deprecation in eloquence than we then exhibited—the supplicating look right up into the master's face; the touching modulation of the whine; the additional tightness and caution with which we grasped the waistbands with one hand, when it was necessary to use the other in wiping our eyes and noses with the polished sleeve-cuff; the sincerity and vehemence with which we promised never to be guilty again, still shrewdly including the condition of present impunity for our offence: "this —one—time—master, if ye plaise, sir"; and the utter hopelessness and despair which were legible in the last groan, as we grasped the "master's" leg in utter recklessness of judgment, were all perfect in their way. Reader, have you ever got a reprieve from the gallows? I beg pardon, my dear sir; I only meant to ask, are you capable of entering into what a personage of that description might be supposed to feel, on being informed, after the knot had been neatly tied under the left ear, and the cap drawn over his eyes, that his Majesty had granted him a full pardon? But you remember your own school-boy days, and that's enough.

The nice discrimination with which Norah used to time her interference was indeed surprising. God help us! limited was our experience, and shallow our little judgments, or we might, with less trouble than Sir Humphrey Davy deciphered the Herculaneum MSS., have known what the master meant when, with the upraised arm hung over us, his eye was fixed upon the door of the kitchen, waiting for Norah's appearance.

Long, my fair and virtuous countrywomen—I repeat it to you all, as I did to Norah—may you reign in the hearts and affections of your husbands (but nowhere else), the grace, ornaments, and happiness of their hearths and lives, you jewels, you! You are paragons of all that's good, and your feelings are highly creditable to yourselves and to humanity.

When Norah advanced, with her brawny uplifted arm (for she was a powerful woman) and forbidding aspect, to interpose between us and the avenging terrors of the birch, do you think that she did not reflect honour on her sex and the national character? I sink the base allusion to the *miscaun* of fresh butter which we had placed in her hands that morning, or the dish of eggs or of meal which we had either begged or stolen at home, as a present for her; disclaiming, at the same time, the rascally idea of giving it from any motive beneath the most lofty-minded and disinterested generosity on our part.

Then, again, never did a forbidding face shine with so winning and amicable an expression as did hers on that merciful occasion. The sun dancing a hornpipe on Easter Sunday morning, or the full moon sailing as proud as a peacock in a new halo head-dress, was a very disrespectable sight compared to Norah's red, beaming face, shrouded in her dowd cap with long ears

that descended to her masculine and substantial neck. Owing to her influence, the whole economy of the school was good; for we were permitted to cuff one another, and do whatever we please, with impunity, if we brought the meal, eggs, or butter; except some scapegoat who was not able to accomplish this, and he generally received on his own miserable carcase what was due to us all.

Poor Jack Murray! his last words on the scaffold, for being concerned in the murder of Pierce the gauger, were, that he got the first of his bad habits under Pat Mulligan and Norah—that he learned to steal by secreting at home butter and meal to paste up the master's eyes to his bad conduct—and that his fondness for quarrelling arose from being permitted to head a faction at school; a most ungrateful return for the many acts of grace which the indulgence of Norah caused to be issued in his favour.

I was but a short time under Pat, when, after the general example, I had my cudgel, which I used to carry regularly to a certain furze bush within fifty perches of the "seminary," where I hid it till after "dismiss." I grant it does not look well in me to become my own panegyrist; but I can at least declare that there were few among the Caseys able to resist the prowess of this right arm, puny as it was at the period in question. Our battles were obstinate and frequent; but as the quarrels of the two families and their relations on each side were as bitter and pugnacious in fairs and markets as ours were in school, we hit upon the plan of holding our Lilliputian engagements upon the same days on which our fathers and brothers contested. According to this plan, it very often happened that the corresponding parties were successful, and as frequently that whilst

the Caseys were well drubbed in the fair, their sons were victorious at school, and *vice versâ*.

For my part I was early trained to cudgelling, and before I reached my fourteenth year could pronounce as sage and accurate an opinion upon the merits of a *shillelagh*, as it is called, or cudgel, as a veterinary surgeon of sixty could upon a dead ass at first sight. Our plan of preparing was this. We sallied out to any place where there was an underwood of blackthorn or oak, and having surveyed the premises with the eye of a connoisseur, we selected the straightest root-growing piece which we could find; for, if not root-growing, we did not consider it worth cutting, knowing from experience that a branch, how straight and fair soever it might look, would snap in the twist and tug of war. Having cut it as close to the root as possible, we then lopped off the branches, and put it up in the chimney to season. When seasoned, we took it down, and wrapping it in brown paper, well steeped in hog's lard or oil, we buried it in a horse-dunghill, paying it a daily visit for the purpose of making it straight by doubling back the bends or angles across the knee, in a direction contrary to their natural tendency. Having daily repeated this until we had made it straight, and renewed the oiled wrapping-paper until the staff was perfectly saturated, we then rubbed it well with a woollen cloth containing a little black-lead and grease, to give it a polish. This was the last process; except that if we thought it too light at the top, we used to bore a hole in the lower end with a red-hot iron spindle, into which we poured melted lead, for the purpose of giving it the knock-down weight.

There were very few of Paddy Mulligan's scholars without a choice collection of them, and scarcely one

who had not, before his fifteenth year, a just claim to be called the hero of a hundred fights, and the heritor of as many bumps on the cranium as would strike both Gall and Spurzheim speechless.

Now this, be it known, was, and in some districts yet is, an integral part of an Irish peasant's education. In the northern parts of Ireland, where the population of the Catholics on the one side, and of Protestants and Dissenters on the other, is nearly equal, I have known the respective scholars of Catholic and Protestant schools to challenge each other, and meet half-way to do battle, in vindication of their respective creeds ; or for the purpose of establishing the character of their respective masters as the more learned man ; for, if we were to judge by the nature of the education then received, we would be led to conclude that a more commercial nation than Ireland was not on the face of the earth, it being the indispensable part of every scholar's business to become acquainted with the three sets of book-keeping.

The boy who was the handiest and the most daring with the cudgel at Paddy Mulligan's school was Denis Kelly, the son of a wealthy farmer in the neighbourhood. He was a rash, hot-tempered, good-natured lad, possessing a more than common share of this blackthorn ambition ; on which account he was cherished by his relations as the boy that was likely, at a future period, to be able to walk over the course of the parish in fair, market, or patron. He certainly grew up a stout, able young fellow, and before he reached nineteen years was unrivalled at the popular exercises of the peasantry. Shortly after that time he made his *début* in a party quarrel, which took place in one of the Christmas *maragah-mores*, and fully sustained the anticipations which were formed

of him by his relations. For a year or two afterwards no quarrel was fought without him ; and his prowess rose until he had gained the very pinnacle of that ambition which he had determined to reach. About this time I was separated from him, having found it necessary, in order to accomplish my objects in life, to reside with a relation in another part of the country.

The period of my absence, I believe, was about fourteen years, during which space I heard no account of him whatsoever. At length, however, that inextinguishable attachment which turns the affections and memory to the friends of our early days—to those scenes which we traversed when the heart was light and the spirits buoyant—determined me to make a visit to my native place, that I might witness the progress of time and care upon those faces that were once so familiar to me ; that I might once more look upon the meadows, and valleys, and groves, and mountains where I had so often played, and to which I still found myself bound by a tie that a more enlightened view of life and nature only made stronger and more enduring. I accordingly set off, and arrived, late in the evening of a December day, at a little town within a few miles of my native home. On alighting from the coach, and dining, I determined to walk home, as it was a fine, frosty night. The full moon hung in the blue unclouded firmament in all her lustre, and the stars shone out with that tremulous twinkling motion so peculiarly remarkable in frost. I had been absent, I said, about fourteen years, and felt that the enjoyment of this night would form an era in the records of my memory and my feelings. I find myself, indeed, utterly incapable of expressing what I experienced ; but those who have ever been in similar

circumstances will understand what I mean. A strong spirit of practical poetry and romance was upon me, and I thought that a commonplace approach in the open day would have rendered my return to the scenes of my early life a very stale and unedifying matter.

I left the inn at seven o'clock, and as I had only five miles to walk, I would just arrive about nine, allowing myself to saunter on at the rate of two miles and a-half per hour. My sensations, indeed, as I went along, were singular ; and as I took a solitary road across the mountains, the loneliness of the walk, the deep gloom of the valleys, the towering height of the dark hills, and the pale silvery light of a sleeping lake shining dimly in the distance below, gave me such a distinct notion of the sublime and beautiful as I have seldom since experienced. I recommend every man who has been fourteen years absent from his native fields to return by moonlight.

Well, there is a mystery yet undiscovered in our being, for no man can know his feelings or his capacities. Many a slumbering thought, and sentiment, and association reposes within him of which he is utterly ignorant, and which, except he come in contact with those objects whose influence over his mind can alone call them into being, may never be awakened, or give him one moment of either pleasure or pain. There is, therefore, a great deal in the position which we hold in society, and simply in situation. I felt this on that night ; for the tenor of my reflections was new and original, and my feelings had a warmth and freshness in them which nothing but the situation in which I then found myself could give them. The force of association, too, was powerful ; for, as I advanced nearer home, the names of hills, and

lakes, and mountains that I had utterly forgotten, as I thought, were distinctly revived in my memory, and a crowd of youthful thoughts and feelings that I imagined my intercourse with the world and the finger of time had blotted out of my being began to crowd afresh on my fancy. The name of a townland would instantly return with its appearance ; and I could now remember the history of families and individuals that had long been effaced from my recollection.

But what is even more singular is that the superstitious terrors of my boyhood began to come over me, as formerly, whenever a spot noted for supernatural appearances met my eye. It was in vain that I exerted myself to expel them, by throwing the barrier of philosophic reasoning in their way ; they still clung to me, in spite of every effort to the contrary. But the fact is that I was for the moment the slave of a morbid and feverish sentiment, that left me completely at the mercy of the dark and fleeting images that passed over my fancy. I now came to a turn where the road began to slope down into the depths of a valley that ran across it. When I looked forward into the bottom, all was darkness impenetrable, for the moonbeams were thrown off by the height of the mountains that rose on each side of it. I felt an indefinite sensation of fear, because, at that moment, I recollected that it had been, in my younger days, notorious as the scene of an apparition, where the spirit of a murdered pedlar had never been known to permit a solitary traveller to pass without appearing to him, and walking cheek-by-jowl along with him to the next house on the way, at which spot he usually vanished. The influence of my feelings, or, I should rather say, the physical excitement of my nerves, was by no means

slight as these old traditions recurred to me ; although, at the same time, my moral courage was perfectly unimpaired, so that, notwithstanding this involuntary apprehension, I felt a degree of novelty and curiosity in descending the valley. " If it appear," said I, " I shall at least satisfy myself as to the truth of apparitions."

My dress consisted of a long, dark surtout, the collar of which, as the night was keen, I had turned up about my ears, and the corners of it met round my face. In addition to this I had a black silk handkerchief tied across my mouth to keep out the night air ; so that, as my dark fur travelling cap came down over my face, there was very little of my countenance visible. I now had advanced half-way into the valley, and all about me was dark and still : the moonlight was not nearer than the top of the hill which I was descending ; and I often turned round to look upon it, so silvery and beautiful it appeared at a distance. Sometimes I stood for a few moments admiring its effect, and contemplating the dark mountains as they stood out against the firmament, then kindled into magnificent grandeur by the myriads of stars that glowed in its expanse. There was perfect silence and solitude around me ; and as I stood alone in the dark chamber of the mountains I felt the impressiveness of the situation gradually supersede my terrors. A sublime sense of religious awe descended on me ; my soul kindled into a glow of solemn and elevated devotion, which gave me a more intense perception of the presence of God than I had ever before experienced. " How sacred—how awful," thought I, " is this place !—how impressive is this hour !—surely I feel myself at the footstool of God ! The voice of worship is in this deep, soul-thrilling silence ; and the tongue of praise speaks,

as it were, from the very solitude of the mountains!" I then thought of Him who went up into a mountain-top to pray, and felt the majesty of those admirable descriptions of the Almighty given in the Old Testament blend in delightful harmony with the beauty and fitness of the Christian dispensation, that brought life and immortality to light. "Here," said I, "do I feel that I am indeed immortal, and destined for scenes of a more exalted and comprehensive existence!"

I then proceeded farther into the valley, completely freed from the influence of old and superstitious associations. A few perches below me a small river crossed the road, over which was thrown a little stone bridge of rude workmanship. This bridge was the spot on which the apparition was said to appear; and as I approached it I felt the folly of those terrors which had only a few minutes before beset me so strongly. I found my moral energies recruited, and the dark phantasms of my imagination dispelled by the light of religion, which had refreshed me with a deep sense of the Almighty Presence. I accordingly walked forward, scarcely bestowing a thought upon the history of the place, and had got within a few yards of the bridge, when, on resting my eye accidentally upon the little elevation formed by its rude arch, I perceived a black coffin placed at the edge of the road, exactly upon the bridge!

It may be evident to the reader that, however satisfactory the force of philosophical reasoning might have been upon the subject of the solitude, I was too much the creature of sensation for an hour before to look on such a startling object with firm nerves. For the first two or three minutes, therefore, I exhibited as finished a specimen of the dastardly as could be imagined. My

hair absolutely raised my cap some inches off my head ; my mouth opened to an extent which I did not conceive it could possibly reach ; I thought my eyes shot out from their sockets ; and my fingers spread out and became stiff, though powerless. The *obstupui* was perfectly realised in me ; for, with the exception of a single groan, which I gave on first seeing the object, I found that if one word would save my life or transport me to my own fireside, I could not utter it. I was also rooted to the earth as if by magic ; and although instant tergiversation and flight had my most hearty concurrence, I could not move a limb, nor even raise my eye off the sepulchral-looking object which lay before me. I now felt the perspiration fall from my face in torrents, and the strokes of my heart fell audibly on my ear. I even attempted to say, " God preserve me," but my tongue was dumb and powerless, and could not move. My eye was still upon the coffin, when I perceived that, from being motionless, it instantly began to swing, first in a lateral, then in a longitudinal direction, although it was perfectly evident that no human hand was nearer it than my own. At length I raised my eyes off it, for my vision was strained to an aching intensity, which I thought must have occasioned my eye-strings to crack. I looked instinctively about me for assistance—but all was dismal, silent, and solitary ; even the moon had disappeared among a few clouds that I had not noticed in the sky.

As I stood in this state of indescribable horror I saw the light gradually fade away from the tops of the mountains, giving the scene around me a dim and spectral ghastliness, which to those who were never in such a situation is altogether inconceivable.

At length I thought I heard a noise as it were of a rushing tempest sweeping from the hills down into the valleys; but on looking up I could perceive nothing but the dusky desolation that brooded over the place. Still the noise continued; again I saw the coffin move; I then felt the motion communicated to myself, and found my body borne and swung backwards and forwards, precisely according to the motion of the coffin. I again attempted to utter a cry for assistance, but could not. The motion of my body still continued, as did the approaching noise in the hills. I looked up a second time in the direction in which the valley wound off between them, but judge of what I must have suffered when I beheld one of the mountains moving, as it were, from its base, and tumbling down towards the spot on which I stood. In the twinkling of an eye the whole scene, hills and all, began to tremble, to vibrate, and to fly round me with a rapid, delirious motion; the stars shot back into the depths of heaven, and disappeared; the ground on which I stood began to pass from beneath my feet; a noise like the breaking of a thousand gigantic billows again burst from every direction, and I found myself instantly overwhelmed by some deadly weight, which prostrated me on the earth, and deprived me of sense and motion.

I know not how long I continued in this state; but I remember that, on opening my eyes, the first object that presented itself to me was the sky, glowing as before, with ten thousand stars, and the moon walking in her unclouded brightness through the heavens. The whole circumstance then rushed back upon my mind, but with a sense of horror very much diminished. I arose, and on looking towards the spot, perceived the coffin in the

same place. I then stood, and, endeavouring to collect myself, viewed it as calmly as possible ; it was, however, as motionless and distinct as when I first saw it. I now began to reason upon the matter, and to consider that it was pusillanimous in me to give way to such boyish terrors. The confidence, also, which my heart, only a short time before this, had experienced in the presence and protection of the Almighty, again returned, and, along with it, a degree of religious fortitude which invigorated my whole system. " Well," thought I, " in the name of God I shall ascertain what you are, let the consequence be what it may." I then advanced until I stood exactly over it, and, raising my foot, gave it a slight kick. " Now," said I, " nothing remains but to ascertain whether it contains a dead body or not," but on raising the end of it I perceived by its lightness that it was empty. To investigate the cause of its being left in this solitary spot was, however, not within the compass of my philosophy, so I gave that up. On looking at it more closely I noticed a plate marked with the name and age of the person for whom it was intended, and on bringing my eye near the letters, I was able, between fingering and reading, to make out the name of my old cudgel-fighting schoolfellow, Denis Kelly.

This discovery threw a partial light upon the business ; but I now remembered to have heard of individuals who had seen black, unearthly coffins inscribed with the names of certain living persons, and that these were considered as ominous of the death of those persons. I accordingly determined to be certain that this was a real coffin ; and, as Denis's house was not more than a mile before me, I decided on carrying it that far. " If he be dead," thought I, " it will be all right ; and, if not, we will see

more about it." My mind, in fact, was diseased with terror. I instantly raised the coffin, and, as I found a rope lying on the ground under it, I strapped it about my shoulders and proceeded ; nor could I help smiling when I reflected upon the singular transition which the man of sentiment and sensation so strangely underwent—from the sublime contemplation of the silent mountain solitude and the spangled heavens to the task of carrying a coffin. It was an adventure, however, and I was resolved to see how it would terminate.

There was from the bridge an ascent in the road, not so gradual as that by which I descended on the other side ; and, as the coffin was rather heavy, I began to repent of having anything to do with it, for I was by no means experienced in carrying coffins. The carriage of it was, indeed, altogether an irksome and unpleasant concern ; for, owing to my ignorance of using the rope that tied it skilfully, it was every moment sliding down my back, dragging along the stones, or bumping against my heels ; besides, I saw no sufficient grounds I had for entering upon the ludicrous and odd employment of carrying another man's coffin, and was several times upon the point of washing my hands out of it altogether. But the novelty of the incident, and the mystery in which it was involved, decided me in bringing it as far as Kelly's house, which was exactly on my way home.

I had yet half a milé to go ; but I thought it would be best to strap it more firmly about my body before I could start again. I, therefore, set it standing on its end, just at the turn of the road, until I should breathe a little, for I was rather exhausted by a trudge under it of half a mile and upwards. Whilst the coffin was in this position, I standing exactly behind it (Kelly had been

a tall man, consequently it was somewhat higher than I was), a crowd of people bearing lights advanced round the corner, and the first object which presented itself to their vision was the coffin in that position, whilst I was totally invisible behind it. As soon as they saw it there was an involuntary cry of consternation from the whole crowd. At this time I had the coffin once more strapped firmly by a running knot to my shoulders, so that I could loose it whenever I pleased. On seeing the party, and hearing certain expressions which dropped from them, I knew at once that there had been some unlucky blunder in the business on their part; and I would have given a good deal to be out of the circumstances in which I then stood. I felt that I could not possibly have accounted for my situation without bringing myself in for as respectable a portion of rank cowardice as those who ran away from the coffin; for that it was left behind in a fit of terror I now entertained no doubt whatever, particularly when I remembered the traditions connected with the spot in which I found it.

"*Manim a Yea agus a wurrah!*" exclaimed one of them, "if the black man hasn't brought it up from the bridge—*dher a lorna heena*, he did; for it was above the bridge we first seen him: jist for all the world—the Lord be about us—as Antony and me wor coming out on the road at the bridge, there he was standing—a headless man, all black, widout face or eyes upon him—and then we cut acrass the fields home."

"But where is he now, Eman?" said one of them. "Are you sure you seen him?"

"Seen him!" both exclaimed; "do ye think we'd take to our scrapers like two hares, only we did? Arrah, bad manners to you, do you think the coffin could walk

up wid itself from the bridge to this, only he brought it ? —isn't that enough ? "

" Thrue for yees," the rest exclaimed ; " but what's to be done ? "

" Why, to bring the coffin home, now that we're all together," another observed. " They say he never appears to more than two at wanst, so he won't be apt to show himself now."

" Well, boys, let two of you go down to it," said one of them, " and we'll wait here till yees bring it up."

" Yes," said Eman Dhu, " do you go down, Owen, as you have the scapular on you, and the jug of holy water in your hand, and let Billy M'Shane, here, repate the confeethur* along wid you."

" Isn't it the same thing, Eman," replied Owen, " if I shake the holy water on you and whoever goes wid you : sure, you know that if only one dhrop of it touched you, the divil himself couldn't harm you ! "

" And what needs yourself be afraid, then," retorted Eman, " and you has the scapular on you to the back of that ? Didn't you say, as you wor coming out, that if it was the divil you'd disparse him ? "

" You had betther not be mintioning his name, you *omadhaun*," replied the other. " If I was your age, and hadn't a wife and childher on my hands, it's myself that would trust in God and go down manfully ; but the people are hen-hearted now besides what they used to be in my time."

During this conversation I had resolved, if possible, to keep up the delusion until I could get myself extricated with due secrecy out of this ridiculous situation ; and

* *Confiteor.*

I was glad to find that, owing to their cowardice, there was some likelihood of effecting my design.

"Ned," said one of them to a little man, "go down and spake to it, as it can't harm *you*."

"Why, sure," said Ned, with a tremor in his voice, "I can spake to it where I am, widout going within rache of it. Boys, stay close to me—hem—In the name of—But don't you think I had betther spake to it in the Latin I sarve Mass wid? it can't but answer that, for the sowl of it, seeing it's a blest language."

"Very well," the rest replied; "try that, Ned; give it the best and ginteelest grammar you have, and maybe it may thrate us dacent."

Now it so happened that in my schoolboy days I had joined, from mere frolic, a class of young fellows who were learning what is called the "Sarvin' of Mass," and had impressed it so accurately on a pretty retentive memory that I never forgot it. At length Ned pulled out his beads, and bedewed himself most copiously with the holy water. He then shouted out, with a voice which resembled that of a man in an ague fit—"*Dom-i-n-us vo-bis-cum?*" "*Et cum spiritu tuo*," I replied, in a husky, sepulchral tone, from behind the coffin. As soon as I uttered these words the whole crowd ran back instinctively with affright; and Ned got so weak that they were obliged to support him.

"Lord have marcy on us!" said Ned. "Boys, isn't it an awful thing to spake to a spirit! My hair is like I dunna what, it's sticking up so stiff upon my head."

"Spake to it in English, Ned," said they, "till we hear what it will say. Ax it does anything trouble it, or whether its sowl's in purgatory."

"Wouldn't it be betther," observed another, "to ax it

who murdhered it ?—maybe it wants to discover that."

" In the—na-me of g-o-o-d-ness," said Ned, down to me, " what are you ? "

" I'm the soul," I replied, in the same voice, " of the pedlar that was murdered on the bridge below."

" And—who—was—it, sur, wid—submission, that—murdhered—you ? "

To this I made no reply.

" I say," continued Ned, " in—the—name—of—g-o-o-d-ness—who was it—that took the liberty of murdhering you, dacent man ? "

" Ned Corrigan," I answered, giving his own name.

" Hem ! God presarve us ! Ned Corrigan ! " he exclaimed. " What Ned, for there's two of them ? Is it myself, or the other vagabone ? "

" Yourself, you murderer ! " I replied.

" Ho ! " said Ned, getting quite stout—" is that you, neighbour ? Come now, walk out wid yourself out of that coffin, you vagabone you, whoever you are."

" What do you mane, Ned, by spaking to it that a-away ? " the rest inquired.

" Hut," said Ned, " it's some fellow or other that's playing a thrick upon us. Sure, I never knew neither act nor part of the murdher, nor of the murdherers ; and you know, if it was anything of that nature, it couldn't tell me a lie, and me a scapularian, along wid axing it in God's name, wid Father Feasthalagh's Latin."

" Big tare-an-ouns ! " said the rest, " if we thought it was any man making fun of us, but we'd crop the ears off his head, to tache him to be joking ! "

To tell the truth, when I heard this suggestion I began to repent of my frolic ; but I was determined to make another effort to finish the adventure creditably.

"Ned," said they, "throw some of the holy water on us all, and, in the name of St. Pether and the Blessed Virgin, we'll go down and examine it in a body."

This they considered a good thought, and Ned was sprinkling the water about him in all directions, whilst he repeated some jargon which was completely unintelligible. They then began to approach the coffin at dead-march time, and I felt that this was the only moment in which my plan could succeed, for, had I waited until they came down, all would have been discovered. As soon, therefore, as they began to move towards me, I also began, with equal solemnity, to retrograde towards them; so that, as the coffin was between us, it seemed to move without human means.

"Stop, for God's sake—stop!" shouted Ned; "it's movin'! It has made the coffin alive; don't you see it stepping this way widout hand or foot, barring the boords!"

There was now a halt to ascertain the fact; but I still retrograded. This was sufficient—a cry of terror broke from the whole group, and without waiting for further evidence they set off in the direction they came from, at full speed, Ned flinging the jug of holy water at the coffin, lest the latter should follow, or the former encumber him in his flight. Never was there so complete a discomfiture; and so eager were they to escape that several of them came down on the stones, and I could hear them shouting with desperation, and imploring the more advanced not to leave them behind. I instantly disentangled myself from the coffin, and left it standing exactly in the middle of the road, for the next passenger to give it a lift as far as Denis Kelly's, if he felt so disposed. I lost no time in making the best of my way home; and,

on passing poor Denis's house, I perceived, by the bustle and noise within, that he was dead.

I had given my friends no notice of this visit; my reception was consequently the warmer, as I was not expected. That evening was a happy one, which I shall long remember. At supper I alluded to Kelly, and received from my brother a full account, as given in the following narrative, of the circumstances which caused his death.

"I need not remind you, Toby, of our schoolboy days, nor of the principles usually imbibed at such schools as that in which the two tiny factions of the Caseys and the Murphys qualified themselves—among the latter of whom you cut so distinguished a figure. You will not, therefore, be surprised to hear that those two factions are as bitter as ever, and that the boys who at Pat Mulligan's school belaboured each other, in imitation of their brothers and fathers, continue to set the same iniquitous example to their children; so that this groundless and hereditary enmity is likely to descend to future generations—unless, indeed, the influence of a more enlightened system of education may check it. But, unhappily, there is a strong suspicion of the object proposed by such a system; so that the advantages likely to result from it to the lower orders of the people will be slow and distant."

"But, John," said I, "now that we are upon that subject, let me ask what really is the bone of contention between Irish factions?"

"I assure you," he replied, "I am almost as much at a loss, Toby, to give you a satisfactory answer as if you asked me the elevation of the highest mountain on the moon; and I believe you would find equal difficulty

in ascertaining the cause of the feuds from the factions themselves. I really am convinced they know not, nor, if I rightly understand them, do they much care. Their object is to fight, and the turning of a straw will at any time furnish them with sufficient grounds for that. I do not think, after all, that the enmity between them is purely personal: they do not hate each other individually; but having originally had one quarrel upon some trifling occasion, the beaten party could not bear the stigma of defeat without another trial of strength. Then if they succeed, the *onus* of retrieving lost credit is thrown upon the party that was formerly victorious. If they fail a second time, the double triumph of their conquerors excites them to a greater determination to throw off the additional disgrace; and this species of alternation perpetuates the evil.

"These habits, however, familiarise our peasantry to acts of outrage and violence—the bad passions are cultivated and nourished, until crimes, which peaceable men look upon with fear and horror, lose their real magnitude and deformity in the eyes of Irishmen. I believe this kind of undefined hatred between either parties or nations is the most dangerous and fatal spirit which could pervade any portion of society. If you hate a man for an obvious and palpable injury, it is likely that when he cancels that injury by an act of subsequent kindness, accompanied by an exhibition of sincere sorrow, you will cease to look upon him as your enemy; but where the hatred is such that, while feeling it, you cannot, on a sober examination of your heart, account for it, there is little hope that you will ever be able to stifle the enmity which you entertain against him. This however, in politics and religion is what is frequently

designated as principle—a word on which men, possessing higher and greater advantages than the poor, ignorant peasantry of Ireland, pride themselves. In sects and parties we may mark its effects among all ranks and nations. I, therefore, seldom wish, Toby, to hear a man assert that he is of this party or that from principle; for I am usually inclined to suspect that he is not, in this case, influenced by conviction.

"Kelly was a man who, but for these scandalous proceedings among us, might have been now alive and happy. Although his temperament was warm, yet that warmth communicated itself to his good as well as to his evil qualities. In the beginning his family were not attached to any faction—and when I use the word faction it is in contradistinction to the word party; for faction, you know, is applied to a feud or grudge between Roman Catholics exclusively. But when he was young he ardently attached himself to the Murphys; and, having continued among them until manhood, he could not abandon them consistently with that sense of mistaken honour which forms so prominent a feature in the character of Irish peasantry. But, although the Kellys were not faction men, they were bitter party men, being the ringleaders of every quarrel which took place between the Catholics and Protestants, or, I should rather say, between the Orangemen and Whiteboys.

"From the moment when Denis attached himself to the Murphys until the day he received the beating which subsequently occasioned his death, he never withdrew from them. He was in all their battles; and in course of time induced his relations to follow his example; so that, by general consent, they were nicknamed 'the Errigle Slashers.' Soon after you left the country and

went to reside with my uncle, Denis married a daughter of little Dick Magrath's, from the Race-road, with whom he got a little money. She proved a kind, affectionate wife ; and, to do him justice, I believe he was an excellent husband. Shortly after his marriage his father died, and Denis succeeded him in his farm ; for you know that among the peasantry the youngest usually gets the landed property—the elder children being obliged to provide for themselves according to their ability, or otherwise a population would multiply upon a portion of land inadequate to their support.

" It was supposed that Kelly's marriage would have been the means of producing a change in him for the better, but it did not. He was, in fact, the slave of a low, vain ambition, which constantly occasioned him to have some quarrel or other on his hands ; and as he possessed great physical courage and strength, he became the champion of the parish. It was in vain that his wife used every argument to induce him to relinquish such practices ; the only reply he was in the habit of making was a good-humoured slap on the back, and a laugh, saying—

" ' That's it, Honor ; sure, and isn't that the Magraths all over, that would let the manest *spalpeen* that ever chewed cheese thramp upon them widout raising a hand in their own defence ; and I don't blame you for being a coward, seeing that you have their blood in your veins —not but that there ought to be something betther in you, afther all ; for it's the M'Carrons, by your mother's side, that had the good dhrop of their own in them, anyhow—but you're a Magrath, out and out.'

" ' And, Denis,' Honor would reply, ' it would be a blessed day for the parish if all in it were as peaceable

as the same Magraths. There would be no sore heads, nor broken bones, nor fighting, nor slashing of one another in fairs and markets, when people ought to be minding their business. You're ever and always at the Magraths, bekase they don't join you agin the Caseys or the Orangemen, and more fools they'd be to make or meddle between you, having no spite agin either of them ; and it would be wiser for you to be sed by the Magraths, and red your hands out of sich ways altogether. What did ever the Murphys do to sarve you or any of your family, that you'd go to make a great man of yourself fighting for them ? Or what did the poor Caseys do to make you go agin the honest people ? Arrah, bad manners to me, if you know what you're about, or if sonse or grace can ever come of it ; and, mind my words, Denis, if God hasn't sed it, you'll live to rue your folly for the same work.'

" At this Denis would laugh heartily. ' Well said, Honor Magrath, but not Kelly. Well, it's one comfort that our childher aren't likely to follow your side of the house, anyway. Come here, Lanty—come over, *acushla*, to your father ! Lanty, *ma bouchal*, what 'ill you do when you grow a man ? '

" ' I'll buy a horse of my own to ride on, daddy.'

" ' A horse, Lanty !—and so you will, *ma bouchal ;* but that's not it—sure, that's not what I mane, Lanty. What'll you do to the Caseys ? '

" ' Ho, ho ! the Caseys !—I'll bate the blackguards wid your blackthorn, daddy ! '

" ' Ha, ha, ha !—that's my stout man—my brave little sodger ! *Wus dha lamh, avick !*—give me your hand, my son ! Here, Nelly,' he would say to the child's

eldest sister, 'give him a brave whang of bread, to make him able to bate the Caseys. Well, Lanty, who more will you leather, *ahagur ?* '

"' All the Orangemen—I'll kill all the Orangemen ! '

" This would produce another laugh from the father, who would again kiss and shake hands with his son for these early manifestations of his own spirit.

"' Lanty, *ma bouchal*,' he would say, 'thank God you're not a Magrath ; 'tis you that's a Kelly, every blessed inch of you !—and if you turn out as good a *builla batthah* as your father afore you, I'll be contint, *avourneen !* '

"' God forgive you, Denis,' the wife would reply—'it's long before you'd think of larning him his prayers, or his catechism, or anything that's good ! Lanty, *agra*, come over to myself, and never heed what that man says ; for, except you have some poor body's blessing, he'll bring you to no good.'

" Sometimes, however, Kelly's own natural good sense, joined with the remonstrances of his wife, prevailed for a short time, and he would withdraw himself from the connection altogether ; but the force of habit and of circumstances was too strong in him to hope that he could ever overcome it by his own firmness, for he was totally destitute of religion. The peaceable intervals of his life were, therefore, very short.

" One summer evening I was standing in my own garden, when I saw a man galloping up towards me at full speed. When he approached I recognised him as one of the Murphy faction, and perceived that he was cut and bleeding.

"' Murphy,' said I, 'what's the matter ? '

"' Hard fighting, sir,' said he, 'is the matter. The

Caseys gathered all their faction, bekase they heard that Denis Kelly has given us up, and they're sweeping the street wid us. I'm going hot foot for Kelly, sir, for even the very name of him will turn the tide in our favour. Along wid that, I have sint in a score of the Duggans, and, if I get in Denis, plase God, we'll clear the town of them ! '

" He then set off, but pulled up abruptly, and said—

" ' *Arrah*, Mr. Darcy, maybe you'd be civil enough to lind me the loan of a sword, or bagnet, or gun, or anything that way, that would be sarviceable to a body on a pinch ? '

" ' Yes ! ' said I, ' and enable you to commit murder. No, no, Murphy ! I'm sorry it's not in my power to put a final stop to such dangerous quarrels.'

" He then dashed off, and in the course of a short time I saw him and Kelly, both on horseback, hurrying into the town in all possible haste, armed with their cudgels. The following day I got my dog and gun, and sauntered about the hills, making a point to call upon Kelly. I found him with his head tied up, and his arm in a sling.

" ' Well, Denis,' said I, ' I find you have kept your promise of giving up quarrels ! '

" ' And so I did, sir,' said Denis ; ' but, sure, you wouldn't have me go for to desart them, when the Caseys wor three to one over them. No ; God be thanked, I'm not so mane as that, anyhow. Besides, they welted both my brothers within an inch of their lives.'

" I think they didn't miss yourself,' said I.

" ' You may well say they did not, sir,' he replied ; ' and, to tell God's truth, they thrashed us right and left out of the town, although we rallied three times and came in again. At any rate, it's the first time for the last five years that they dare go up and down the street calling out for the face of a Murphy or a Kelly—for they're as

bitter now agin us as agin the Murphys themselves.'

"'Well, I hope, Denis,' I observed, 'that what occurred yesterday will prevent you from entering into their quarrels in future. Indeed, I shall not give over until I prevail on you to lead a quiet and peaceable life, as the father of a rising family ought to do.'

"'Denis,' said the wife, when I alluded to the children, looking at him with a reproachful and significant expression—'Denis, do you hear that?—the father of a family, Denis! Oh, then, God look down on that family, but it's—*Musha*, God bless you and yours, sir,' said she to me, dropping that part of the subject abruptly. 'It's kind of you to trouble yourself about him, at all, at all; it's what them that has a betther right to do it doesn't do.'

"'I hope,' said I, 'that Denis's own good sense will show him the folly and guilt of his conduct, and that he will not, under any circumstances, enter into their battles in future. Come, Denis, will you promise me this?'

"'If any man,' replied Denis, 'could make me do it, it's yourself, sir, or any one of your family; but if the priest of the parish was to go down on his two knees before me, I wouldn't give it up till we give them vagabone Caseys one glorious battherin', which, plase God, we'll do, and are well able to do, before a month of Sundays goes over us. Now, sir, you needn't say another word,' said he, seeing me about to speak, 'for, by Him that made me, we'll do it. If any man, I say, could persuade me agin it, you could; but, if we don't pay them full interest for what we got, why, my name's not Denis Kelly—ay, sweep them like varmint out of the town, body and sleeves!'

"I saw argument would be lost on him, so I only observed that I feared it would eventually end badly.

"'Och, many and many's the time, Mr. Darcy,' said Honor, 'I prophesied the same thing; and if God hasn't said it, he'll be coming home a corpse to me some day or other, for he got as much bating, sir, as would be enough to kill a horse; and to tell you God's truth, sir, he's breeding up his childher——'

"'Honor,' said Kelly, irritated, 'whatever I do, do I lave it in your power to say that I'm a bad husband? so don't rise me by your talk, for I don't like to be provoked. I know it's wrong, but what can I do? Would you have me for to show the *garran bane*,* and lave them like a cowardly thraitor, now that the other faction is coming up to be their match? No; let what will come of it, I'll never do the mane thing—death before dishonour!'

"In this manner Kelly went on for years—sometimes, indeed, keeping quiet for a short period, but eventually drawn in, from the apprehension of being reproached with want of honour and truth to his connection. This, truly, is an imputation which no peasant could endure; nor, were he thought capable of treachery, would his life be worth a single week's purchase. Many a time have I seen Kelly reeling home, his head and face sadly cut, the blood streaming from him, and his wife and some neighbour on each side of him—the poor woman weeping, and deploring the senseless and sanguinary feuds in which her husband took so active a part.

"About three miles from this, down at the Long Ridge,

* The white horse. James II. is said to have fled from the battle the Boyne on a white horse.

where the Shannons live, dwelt a family of the M'Guigans, cousins to Denis. They were anything but industrious, although they might have lived very independently, having held a farm on what they call an old take, which means a long lease taken out when the lands were cheap. It so happened, however, that, like too many of their countrymen, they paid little attention to the cultivation of their farm, the consequence of which neglect was that they became embarrassed and overburdened with arrears. Their landlord was old Sam Simmons, whose only fault to his tenants was an excess of indulgence, and a generous disposition, wherever he could possibly get an opportunity, to scatter his money about him, upon the spur of a benevolence which it would seem never ceased goading him to acts of the most Christian liberality and kindness. Along with these excellent qualities, he was remarkable for a most rooted aversion to law and lawyers ; for he would lose one hundred pounds rather than recover that sum by legal proceedings, even when certain that five pounds would effect it ; but he seldom or never was known to pardon a breach of the peace.

"I have always found that an excess of indulgence in a landlord never fails ultimately to injure and relax the industry of the tenant ; at least, this was the effect which his forbearance produced on them. But the most extraordinary good nature has its limits, and so had his ; after repeated warning, and the most unparalleled patience on his part, he was at length compelled to determine on at once removing them from his estate, and letting his land to some more efficient and deserving tenant. He accordingly desired them to remove their property from the premises, as he did not wish, he said, to leave them without the means of entering upon another

farm, if they felt so disposed. This they refused to do, adding that they would at least put him to the expense of ejecting them. He then gave orders to his agent to seize; but they, in the meantime, had secreted their effects by night among their friends and relations, sending a cow to this one and a horse to that; so that when the bailiff came to levy his execution he found very little except the empty walls. They were, however, ejected without ceremony, and driven altogether off the farm, for which they had actually paid nothing for the three preceding years. In the meantime the farm was advertised to be let, and several persons had offered themselves as tenants; but what appeared very remarkable was, that the Roman Catholics seldom came a second time to make any further inquiry about it; or, if they did, Simmons observed that they were sure to withdraw their proposals, and ultimately decline having anything to do with it.

"This was a circumstance which he could not properly understand; but the fact was that the peasantry were, to a man, members of a widely-extending system of Whiteboyism, the secret influence of which intimidated such of their own religion as intended to take it, and prevented them from exposing themselves to the penalty which they knew those who should dare to occupy it must pay. In a short time, however, the matter began to be whispered about, until it spread gradually, day after day, through the parish, that those who already had proposed, or intended to propose, were afraid to enter upon the land on any terms. Hitherto, it is true, these threats floated about only in the invisible form of rumour

"The farm had been now unoccupied for about a year. Party spirit ran very high among the peasantry,

and no proposals came in, or were at all likely to come. Simmons then got advertisements printed, and had them posted up in the most conspicuous parts of this and the neighbouring parishes. It was expected, however, that they would be torn down; but, instead of that, there was a written notice posted up immediately under each, which ran in the following words :—

"'TAKE NOTESS.

"'*Any man that'll dare to take the farm belonging to yallow Sam Simmons, and sitivated at the Long Ridge, will be flayed alive.*

"'MAT MIDNIGHT.

"'N.B.—*It's it that was latterally occupied by the M'Guigans.*'

"This occasioned Simmons and the other magistrates of the barony to hold a meeting, at which they subscribed to the amount of fifty pounds as a reward for discovering the author or authors of the threatening notice; but the advertisement containing the reward, which was posted in the usual places through the parish, was torn down on the first night after it was put up. In the meantime, a man nicknamed Vengeance—Vesey Vengeance, in consequence of his daring and fearless spirit, and his bitterness in retaliating injury—came to Simmons, and proposed for the farm. The latter candidly mentioned the circumstances of the notice, and fairly told him that he was running a personal risk in taking it.

"'Leave that to me, sir,' said Vengeance; 'if you will set me the farm at the terms I offer, I am willing to become your tenant; and let them that posted up the notices

go to old Nick, or, if they annoy me, let them take care I don't send them there. I am a true-blue, sir—a purple man*—have lots of firearms, and plenty of stout fellows in the parish ready and willing to back me ; and, by the light of day ! if they make or meddle with me or mine, we will hunt them in the face of the world, like so many mad dogs, out of the country. What are they but a pack of ribils, that would cut our throats if they dared ! '

" ' I have no objection," said Simmons, ' that you should express a firm determination to defend your life and protect your property ; but I utterly condemn the spirit with which you seem to be animated. Be temperate and sober, but be firm. I will afford you every assistance and protection in my power, both as a magistrate and a landlord ; but, if you speak so incautiously, the result may be serious, if not fatal, to yourself.'

" ' Instead of that,' said Vengeance, ' the more a man appears to be afeard, the more danger he is in, as I know by what I have seen ; but, at any rate, if they injure me, I wouldn't ask better sport that taking down the ribils—the bloody-minded villains ! Isn't it a purty thing that a man daren't put one foot past the other, only as they wish ? By the light of day, I'll pepper them ! '

" Shortly after this, Vengeance, braving all their threats, removed to the farm, and set about its cultivation with skill and vigour. He had not been long there, however, when a notice was posted one night on his door giving him ten days to clear off from this interdicted spot, threatening, in case of non-compliance, to make a bonfire of the house and offices, inmates included. The reply which Vengeance made to this was fearless and character-

* Stages of initiation in the Orange system.

istic. He wrote another notice, which he posted on the chapel door, stating that he would not budge an inch—recommending, at the same time, such as intended paying him a nightly visit to be careful that they might not chance to go home with their heels foremost. This indeed, was setting them completely at defiance, and would no doubt have been fatal to Vesey, were it not for a circumstance which I will now relate. In a little dell below Vesey's house lived a poor woman called Doran, a widow ; she inhabited a small hut, and was principally supported by her two sons, who were servants—one to a neighbouring farmer, a Roman Catholic, and the other to Dr. Ableson, rector of the parish. He who had been with the rector lost his health shortly before Vengeance succeeded the M'Guigans as occupier of the land in question, and was obliged to come home to his mother. He was then confined to his bed, from which, indeed, he never rose.

" This boy had been his mother's principal support—for the other was unsettled, and paid her but little attention, being, like most of those in his situation, fond of drinking, dancing, and attending fairs. In short, he became a Ribbonman, and, consequently, was obliged to attend their nightly meetings. Now it so happened that for a considerable time after the threatening notice had been posted on Vengeance's door, he received no annoyance, although the period allowed for his departure had been long past, and the purport of the paper uncomplied with. Whether this proceeded from an apprehension on the part of the Ribbonmen of receiving a warmer welcome than they might wish, or whether they deferred the execution of their threat until Vengeance might be off his guard, I cannot determine ; but the fact

is, that some months had elapsed and Vengeance remained hitherto unmolested.

"During this interval the distress of Widow Doran had become known to the inmates of his family, and his mother—for she lived with him—used to bring down each day some nourishing food to the sick boy. In these kind offices she was very punctual; and so great was the poverty of the poor widow, and so destitute the situation of her sick son, that, in fact, the burden of their support lay principally upon Vengeance's family.

"Vengeance was a small, thin man, with fair hair and fiery eyes; his voice was loud and shrill, his utterance rapid, and the general expression of his countenance irritable; his motions were so quick that he rather seemed to run than walk. He was a civil, obliging neighbour, but performed his best actions with a bad grace; a firm, unflinching friend, but a bitter and implacable enemy. Upon the whole, he was generally esteemed and respected—though considered as an eccentric character, for such, indeed, he was. On hearing of Widow Doran's distress, he gave orders that a portion of each meal should be regularly sent down to her and her son; and from that period forward they were both supported principally from his table.

"In this way some months had passed, and still Vengeance was undisturbed in his farm. It often happened, however, that Doran's other son came to see his brother; and during these visits it was but natural that his mother and brother should allude to the kindness which they daily experienced from Vesey.

"One night, about twelve o'clock, a tap came to Widow Doran's door, who happened to be attending the invalid, as he was then nearly in the last stage of his

illness. When she opened it, the other son entered, in an evident hurry, having the appearance of a man who felt deep and serious anxiety.

"'Mother,' said he, 'I was very uneasy entirely about Mick, and just started over to see him, although they don't know at home that I'm out, so I can't stay a crack; but I wish you would go to the door for two or three minutes, as I have something to say to him.'

"'Why, thin, Holy Mother!—Jack, *ahagur*, is there anything the matther, for you look as if you had seen something?'

"'Nothing worse than myself, mother,' he replied; 'nor there's nothing the matther at all—only I have a few words to say to Mick here, that's all.'

"The mother accordingly removed herself out of hearing.

"'Mick,' says the boy, 'this is a bad business—I wish to God I was clear and clane out of it.'

"'What is it?' said Mick, alarmed.

"'Murdher, I'm afeard, if God doesn't turn it off them somehow.'

"'What do you mane, man, at all?' said the invalid, raising himself, in deep emotion, on his elbow, from his poor straw bed.

"'Vengeance,' said he—'Vengeance, man—he's going to get it. I was out with the boys on Sunday evening, and at last it's agreed on to visit him to-morrow night. I'm sure and sartin he'll never escape, for there's more in for him than taking the farm, and daring them so often as he did—he shot two fingers off a brother-in-law of Jem Reilly's one night that they wor on for threshing him, and that's comin' home to him along with the rest.'

"'In the name of God, Jack,' inquired Mick, 'what do you intend to do with him?'

"'Why,' replied Jack, 'it's agreed to put a coal in the thatch, in the first place; and, although they were afeard to name what he's to get besides, I doubt they'll make a spatch-cock of himself. They won't meddle with any other of the family, though—but he's down for it.'

"'Are you to be one of them?' asked Mick.

"'I was the third man named,' replied the other, 'bekase, they said, I knew the place.'

"'Jack,' said his emaciated brother, with much solemnity, raising himself up in the bed—'Jack, if you have act or part in that bloody business, God in His glory you'll never see. Fly the country—cut off a finger or toe—break your arm—or do something that may prevent you from being there. Oh, my God!' he exclaimed, whilst the tears fell fast down his pale cheeks —'to go to murdher the man, and lave his little family widout a head or a father over them, and his wife a widow! To burn his place, widout rhyme, or rason, or offince. Jack, if you go, I'll die cursing you. I'll appear to you —I'll let you rest neither night nor day, sleeping nor waking, in bed or out of bed. I'll haunt you till you'll curse the very day you wor born.'

"'Whisht, Micky,' said Jack, 'you're frightening me. I'll not go—will that satisfy you?'

"'Well, dhrop down on your two knees there," said Micky, 'and swear before the God that has His eye upon you this minute, that you'll have no hand in injuring him or his while you live. If you don't do this, I'll not rest in my grave, and maybe I'll be a corpse before mornin'.'

"'Well, Micky,' said Jack, who, though wild and

unthinking, was a lad whose heart and affections were good, ' it would be hard for me to refuse you that much, and you not likely to be long with me. I will,' and he accordingly knelt down and swore solemnly, in words which his brother dictated to him, that he would not be concerned in the intended murder.

" ' Now, give me your hand, Jack,' said the invalid ; ' God bless you—and so He will. Jack, if I depart before I see you again, I'll die happy. That man has supported me and my mother for near the last three months, bad as you all think him. Why, Jack, we would both be dead of hunger long ago only for his family—and, my God ! to think of such a murdhering intention makes my blood run cowld.'

" ' You had better give him a hint, then,' said Jack, ' some way, or he'll be done for, as sure as you're stretched on that bed ; but don't mintion names, if you wish to keep me from being murdhered for what I did. I must be off now, for I stole out of the barn ; and only that Atty Laghy's gone along with the master to the —— fair, to help him sell the two coults, I couldn't get over at all.'

" ' Well, go home, Jack, and God bless you, and so He will, for what you did this night.'

" Jack accordingly departed after bidding his mother and brother farewell.

" When the old woman came in, she asked her son if there was anything wrong with his brother ; but he replied that there was not.

" ' Nothing at all," said he ; ' but, will you go up airly in the morning, plase God, and tell Vesey Johnston that I want to see him ; and—that—I have a great dale to say to him.'

"'To be sure I will, Micky; but, Lord guard us, what ails you, *avoureen*, you look so frightened?'

"'Nothing at all, at all, mother; but will you go where I say airly to-morrow, for me?'

"'It's the first thing I'll do, God willin',' replied the mother. And the next morning Vesey was down with the invalid very early, for the old woman kept her word, and paid him a timely visit.

"'Well, Micky, my boy,' said Vengeance, as he entered the hut, 'I hope you're no worse this morning.'

"'Not worse, sir,' replied Mick; 'nor, indeed, am I anything better either, but much the same way. Sure, it's I that knows very well that my time here is but short.'

"'Well, Mick, my boy,' said Vengeance, 'I hope you're prepared for death, and that you expect forgiveness, like a Christian. Look up, my boy, to God at once, and pitch the priests and their craft to ould Nick, where they'll all go at the long-run.'

"'I believe,' said Mick, with a faint smile, 'that you're not very fond of the priests, Mr. Johnston; but, if you knew the power they possess as well as I do, you wouldn't spake of them so bad, anyhow.'

"'Me fond of them!' replied the other; 'why, man, they're a set of the most gluttonous, black-looking hypocrites that ever walked on neat's leather, and ought to be hunted out of the country—hunted out of the country, by the light of day, every one of them; for they do nothing but egg up the people against the Protestants.'

"'God help you, Mr. Johnston,' replied the invalid; 'I pity you from my heart for the opinion you hould about the blessed crathurs. I suppose if you were sthruck dead on the spot wid a blast from the fairies, that you think a priest couldn't cure you by one word's spakin?"

"'Cure me!' said Vengeance, with a laugh of disdain; 'by the light of day, if I caught one of them curing me, I'd give him the purtiest chase you ever saw in your life across the hills.'

"'Don't you know,' said Mick, 'that priest Dannelly cured Bob Arthurs of the falling sickness, until he broke the vow that was laid upon him of not going into a church; and the minute he crossed the church-door didn't he dhrop down as bad as ever—and what could the minister do for him?'

"'And don't *you* know,' rejoined Vengeance, 'that that's all a parcel of the most lying stuff possible—lies—lies—all lies—and vagabondism. Why, Mick, you Papishes worship the priests; you think they can bring you to heaven at a word. By the light of day, they must have good sport laughing at you when they get among one another. Why don't they teach you, and give you the Bible to read, the ribelly rascals?—but they're afraid you'd know too much then.'

"'Well, Mr. Johnston,' said Mick, 'I b'lieve you'll never have a good opinion of them, at any rate.'

"'Ay, when the sky falls,' replied Vengeance; 'but you're now on your deathbed, and why don't you pitch them to ould Nick, and get a Bible? Get a Bible, man. There's a pair of them in my house that's never used at all—except my mother's, and she's at it night and day. I'll send one of them down to you. Turn yourself to God—to your Redeemer, that died on the mount of Jehoshaphat, or somewhere about Jerusalem, for your sins—and don't go out of the world from the hand of a rascally priest, with a band about your eyes, as if you were at blind-man's-buff; for, by the light of day, you're as blind as a bat in a religious way."

"'There's no use in sending me a Bible,' replied the invalid, 'for I can't read it; but, whatever you may think, I'm very willing to lave my salvation with my priest.'

"'Why, man,' observed Vengeance, 'I thought you were going to have sense at last, and that you sent for me to give you some spiritual consolation.'

"'No, sir,' replied Mick; 'I have two or three words to spake to you.'

"'Come, come, Mick; now that we're on a spiritual subject, I'll hear nothing from you till I try whether it's possible to give you a true insight into religion. Stop, now, and let us lay our heads together, that we may make out something of a dacenter creed for you to believe in than the one you profess. Tell me truth, do you believe in the priests?'

"'How?' replied Mick. 'I b'lieve that they're holy men; but I know they can't save me widout the Redeemer and His blessed Mother.'

"'By the light above us, you're shuffling, Mick; I say you do believe in them—now don't tell me to the contrary—I say you're shuffling as fast as possible.'

"'I tould you truth, sir,' replied Mick; 'and if you don't b'lieve me, I can't help it.'

"'Don't trust in the priests, Mick; that's the main point to secure your salvation.'

"Mick, who knew his prejudices against the priests, smiled faintly, and replied—

"'Why, sir, I trust in them as being able to make inthercession wid God for me, that's all.'

"'They make intercession! By the stool I'm sitting on, a single word from one of them would ruin you. They, a set of ribels, to make interest for you in heaven!

Didn't they rise the rebellion in Ireland ?—answer me that.'

"'This is a subject, sir, we would never agree on,' replied Mick.

"'Have you the Ten Commandments ?' inquired Vesey.

"'I doubt my mimory's not clear enough to have them in my mind,' said the lad, feeling keenly the imputation of ignorance which he apprehended from Vesey's blunt observations.

"Vesey, however, had penetration enough to perceive his feelings, and, with more delicacy than could be expected from him, immediately moved the question.

"'No matter, Mick,' said he; 'if you would give up the priests, we would get over that point. As it is, I'll give you a lift in the Commandments; and, as I said a while ago, if you take my advice, I'll work up a creed for you that you may depend upon. But now for the Commandments. Let me see.

"'First: Thou shalt have no other gods but Me. Don't you see, man, how that peppers the priests ?

"'Second: Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

"'Third: Thou shalt not make to thyself—no—hang it, no—I'm out; that's the second—very right. Third: Honour thy father and thy mother—you understand that, Mick ? It means that you are bound to—to—just so—to honour your father and your mother, poor woman.'

"'My father—God be good to him—is dead near fourteen years, sir,' replied Mick.

"'Well, in that case, Mick, you see all that's left for you is to honour your mother—although I'm not certain of that either; the Commandments make no allowance

at all for death, and, in that case, why, living or dead, the surest way is to respect and obey them—that is—if the thing weren't impossible. I wish we had blind George M'Gin here, Mick; although he's as great a rogue as ever escaped hemp, yet he'd beat the devil himself at a knotty point.'

"'His breath would be bad about a dying man,' observed Mick.

"'Ay, or a living one,' said Vesey. 'However, let us get on—we were at the Third. Fourth: Thou shalt do no murder.'

"At the word murder, Mick started, and gave a deep groan, whilst his eyes and features assumed a great and hollow expression, resembling that of a man struck with an immediate sense of horror and affright.

"'Oh, for heaven's sake, sir, stop there!' said Doran; 'that brings to my mind the business I had with you, Mr. Johnston.'

"'What is it about?' inquired Vengeance, in his usual eager manner.

"'Do you mind,' said Mick, 'that a paper was stuck one night upon your door, threatening you if you wouldn't lave that farm you're in?'

"'I do—the bloodthirsty villains! but they knew a trick worth two of coming near me.'

"'Well,' said Mick, 'a strange man that I had never seen before come into me last night, and tould me, if I'd see you, to say that you would get a visit from the boys this night, and to take care of yourself.'

"'Give me the hand, Mick,' said Vengeance—'give me the hand. In spite of the priests, by the light of day, you're an honest fellow. This night, you say, they're to come? And what are the bloody wretches

to do, Mick ? But I needn't ask that, for, I suppose, it's to murder myself, and to burn my place.'

" ' I'm afeard, sir, you're not far from the truth,' replied Mick. ' But, Mr. Johnston, for God's sake, don't mintion my name ; for, if you do, I'll get myself what they wor layin' out for you—be burned in my bed, maybe.'

" ' Never fear, Mick,' replied Vengeance ; ' your name will never cross my lips.'

" ' It's a great thing,' said Mick, ' that would make me turn informer ; but, sure, only for your kindness and the goodness of your family, the Lord spare you to one another, mightn't I be dead long ago ? I couldn't have one minute's peace if you or yours came to any harm when I could prevint it.'

" ' Say no more, Mick," said Vengeance, taking his hand again. ' I know that ; leave the rest to me. But how do you find yourself, my poor fellow ? You look weaker than you did, a good deal.'

" ' Indeed, I'm going very fast, sir,' replied Mick ; ' I know it'll soon be over with me.'

" ' Hut, no, man,' said Vengeance, drawing his hand rapidly across his eyes, and clearing his voice. ' Not at all ; don't say so. Would a little broth serve you ? or a bit of fresh meat ?—or would you have a fancy for anything that I could make out for you ? I'll get you wine, if you think it would do you good.'

" ' God reward you,' said Mick, feebly—' God reward you, and open your eyes to the truth. Is my mother likely to come in, do you think ? '

" ' She must be here in a few minutes,' the other replied ; ' she was waiting till they'd churn, that she might bring you down a little fresh milk and butter.'

" ' I wish she was wid me,' said the poor lad, ' for I'm

lonely wantin' her—her voice and the very touch of her hands goes to my heart. Mother, come to me—and let me lay my head upon your breast, *agra machree*, for I think it will be for the last time. We lived lonely, *avourneen*, wid none but ourselves—sometimes in happiness, when the nabours ud be kind to us ; and sometimes in sorrow, when there ud be none to help us. It's all over now, mother, and I'm laving you for ever.'

" Vengeance wiped his eyes. ' Rouse yourself, Mick,' said he—' rouse yourself.'

" ' Who is that sitting along with you on the stool ? ' said Mick.

" ' No one," replied his neighbour—' but what's the matter with you, Mick ?—your face is changed.'

" Mick, however, made no reply ; but after a few slight struggles, in which he attempted to call upon his mother's name, he breathed his last. When Vengeance saw that he was dead—looked upon the cold, miserable hut in which this grateful and affectionate young man was stretched—and then reflected on the important service he had just rendered him, he could not suppress his tears.

" After sending down some of the females to assist his poor mother in laying him out, Vengeance went among his friends and acquaintances, informing them of the intelligence he had received, without mentioning the source from which he had it. After dusk that evening they all flocked as privately as possible to his house, to the number of thirty or forty, well provided with arms and ammunition. Some of them stationed themselves in the outhouses, some behind the garden hedge, and others in the dwellinghouse."

When my brother had got thus far in his narrative,

a tap came to the parlour-door, and immediately a stout-looking man, having the appearance of a labourer, entered the room.

"Well, Lachlin," said my brother, what's the matter?"

"Why, sir," said Lachlin, scratching his head, "I had a bit of a favour to ax, if it would be plasin' to you to grant it to me."

"What is that?" said my brother.

"Do you know, sir," said he, "I haven't been at a wake—let us see—this two or three years, anyhow, and if you'd have no objection, why, I'd slip up a while to Denis Kelly's; he's a distant relation of my own, sir; and blood's thicker than wather, you know."

"I'm just glad you came in, Lachlin," said my brother. "I didn't think of you—take a chair here, and never heed the wake to-night, but sit down and tell us about the attack on Vesey Vengeance long ago. I'll get you a tumbler of punch; and, instead of going to the wake, I will allow you to go to the funeral to-morrow."

"Ah, sir," said Lachlin, "you know whenever the punch is consarned I'm aisily persuaded; but not making little of your tumbler, sir," said the shrewd fellow, "I would get two or three of them if I went to the wake."

"Well, sit down," said my brother, handing him one, "and we won't permit you to get thirsty while you're talking, at all events."

"In throth, you haven't your heart in the likes of it," said Lachlin. "Gentlemen, your healths—your health, sir, and we're happy to see you wanst more. Why, thin, I remember you, sir, when you were a *gorsoon*, passing to school wid your satchel on your back; but, I'll be bound, you're by no means as soople now as you were

thin. Why, sir," turning to my brother, " he could fly, or kick football wid the rabbits. Well, this is raal stuff ! "

" Now, Lachlin," said my brother, " give us an account of the attack you made on Vesey Vengeance's house at the Long Ridge, when all your party were chased out of the town."

" Why, thin, sir, I ought to be ashamed to mintion it ; but you see, gintlemen, there was no getting over being connected wid them, for a man's life wouldn't be his own if he refused—but I hope your brother's safe, sir ! "

" Oh, perfectly safe, Lachlin ; you may rest assured he'll never mention it."

" Well, sir," said Lachlin, addressing himself to me, " Vesey Vengeance was——"

" Lachlin," said my brother, " he knows all about Vesey ; just give an account of the attack."

" The attack, sir !—no, but the chivey we got over the mountains. Why, sir, we met in an ould empty house, you see, that belonged to the Farrells of Ballyboulteen, that went over to America that spring. There wor none wid us, you may be sure, but them that wor up ; and in all we might be about sixty or seventy. The M'Guigans, one way or another, got it up first among them, bekase they expected that Mr. Simmons would take them back when he'd find that no one else dare venthur upon their land. There wor at that time two fellows down from the County Longford, in their neighbourhood, of the name of Collier—although that wasn't their right name—they were here upon their keeping, for the murder of a proctor in their own part of the country. One of them was a tall, powerful fellow, with

sandy hair and red brows ; the other was a slender chap that must have been drawn into it by his brother—for he was very mild and innocent, and always persuaded us agin evil. The M'Guigans brought lashings of whisky, and made them that wor to go foremost almost drunk—these wor the two Colliers, some of the strangers from behind the mountains, and a son of Widdy Doran's, that knew every inch about the place, for he was bred and born jist below the house a bit. He wasn't wid us, however, in regard of his brother being under boord that night ; but instid of him, Tim M'Guigan went to show the way up the little glin to the house—though, for that matther, the most of us knew as well as he did, but we didn't like to be the first to put a hand to it if we could help it.

" At any rate, we sot in Farrell's empty house, drinking whisky, till they wor all gathered, when about two dozen of them got the damp soot from the chimley, and rubbed it over their faces, making them so black that their own relations couldn't know them. We then went across the country in little lots of about six, or ten, or a score ; and we wor glad that the wake was in Widdy Doran's, seeing that if any one would meet us, we wor going to it, you know, and the blackening of the faces would pass for a frolic ; but there was no great danger of being met, for it was now long beyant midnight.

" Well, gintlemen, it puts me into a tremble, even at this time, to think of how little we cared about doing what we wor bent upon. Them that had to manage the business wor more than half drunk ; and, hard fortune to me, but you would think it was to a wedding they went—some of them singing songs aginst the law—some of them quite merry, and laughing, as if they had found

a mare's nest. The big fellow, Collier, had a dark lanthern wid a half-burned turf in it, to light the bonfire, as they said ; others had guns and pistols, some of them charged, and some of them not ; some had bagnets and ould rusty swords, pitchforks, and so on. Myself had nothing in my hand but the flail I was thrashing wid that day—and, to tell the thruth, the divil a step I would have gone with them, only for fraid of my health ; for, as I said a while agone, if any discovery was made afterwards, them that promised to go and turned tail would be marked as the informers. Neither was I so blind but I could see that there wor plenty there that would stay away if they durst.

" Well, we went on till we came to a little dark corner below the house, where we met, and held a council of war upon what we should do. Collier and the other strangers from behind the mountains wor to go first, and the rest wor to stand round the house at a distance—he carried the lanthern, a bagnet, and a horse pistol ; and half a dozen more wor to bring over bottles of straw from Vengeance's own hagyard, to hould up to the thatch. It's all past and gone now—but three of the Reillys were desperate against Vesey that night, particularly one of them that he had shot about a year and a half before—that is, peppered two of the right-hand fingers off him one night in a scuffle as Vesey came home from an Orange-lodge. Well, all went on purty fair ; we had got as far as the outhouses, where we stopped to see if we could hear any noise, but all was quiet as you plase.

" ' Now, Vengeance,' says Reilly, swearing a terrible oath out of him—' you murdering Orange villain, you're going to get your pay,' says he.

" ' Ay,' says M'Guigan, ' what he often threatened to others, he'll soon meet himself, plase God. Come, boys,' says he, ' bring the straw and light it, and just lay it up, my darlings, nicely to the thatch here, and ye'll see what a glorious bonfire we'll have of the black Orange villain's blankets in less than no time.'

" Some of us could hardly stand this. ' Stop, boys,' cried one of Dan Slevin's sons—' stop ; Vengeance is bad enough, but his wife and childher never offended us—we'll not burn the place.'

" ' No,' said others, spaking out when they heard anybody at all having courage to do so—' it's too bad, boys, to burn the place ; for, if we do,' says they, ' some of the innocent may be burned before they get out of the house, or even before they waken out of their sleep.'

" ' Knock at the door first,' says Slevin, ' and bring Vengeance out ; let us cut the ears off his head, and lave him.'

" ' Damn him ! ' says another, ' let us not take the vagabone's life ; it's enough to take the ears from him, and to give him a prod or two of a bagnet on the ribs ; but don't kill him.'

" ' Well, well,' says Reilly, ' let us knock at the door, and get himself and the family out,' says he, ' and then we'll see what can be done wid him.'

" ' Tattheration to me,' says the big Longford fellow, ' if he had sarved me, Reilly, as he did you, but I'd roast him in the flames of his own house,' says he.

" ' I'd have you to know,' says Slevin, ' that you have no command here, Collier. I'm captain at the present time,' says he, ' and more nor what I wish shall not be done. Go over,' says he to the black faces, ' and rap him up.'

"Accordingly, they began to knock at the door, commanding Vengeance to get up and come out to them.

"'Come, Vengeance,' says Collier, 'put on you, my good fellow, and come out till two or three of your neighbours, that wish you well, gets a sight of your purty face, you babe of grace!'

"'Who are you that wants me at all?' says Vengeance from within.

"'Come out first,' says Collier—'a few friends that has a crow to pluck with you. Walk out, *avoureen;* or, if you'd rather be roasted alive, why, you may stay where you are,' says he.

"'Gentlemen,' says Vengeance, 'I have never, to my knowledge, offinded any of you; and I hope you won't be so cruel as to take an industrious, hard-working man from his family, in the clouds of the night, to do him an injury. Go home, gentlemen, in the name of God, and let me and mine alone. You're all mighty dacent gintlemen, you know, and I'm determined never to make or meddle with any of you. Sure, I know right well it's purtecting me you would be, dacent gentlemen. But I don't think there's any of my neighbours there, or they wouldn't stand by and see me injured.'

"'Thrue for you, *avick*,' says they, giving at the same time a terrible pattherrara agin the door with two or three big stones.

"'Stop, stop!' says Vengeance, 'don't break the door, and I'll open it. I know you're merciful, dacent gentlemen—I know you're merciful.'

"So the thief came and unbarred it quietly, and the next minute about a dozen of them that wor within the house let slap at us. As God would have had it, the crowd didn't happen to be fornenst the door, or numbers

of them would have been shot ; and the night was dark, too, which was in our favour. The first volley was scarcely over when there was another slap from the outhouses ; and, after that, another from the gardens ; and, after that, to be sure, we took to our scrapers. Several of them were badly wounded ; but as for Collier, he was shot dead, and M'Guigan was taken prisoner, with five more, on the spot. There never was such a chase as we got ; and only that they thought there was more of us in it, they might have tuck most of us prisoners.

" ' Fly, boys ! ' says M'Guigan, as soon as they fired out of the house—' we've been sould,' says he, ' but I'll die game, anyhow '—and so he did, poor fellow ; for, although he and the other four wor transported, one of them never sould the pass or stagged. Not but that they might have done it, for all that ; only that there was a whisper sent to them that if they did, a single sowl belonging to one of them wouldn't be left livin'. The M'Guigans were cousins of Denis Kelly's, that's now laid out there above.

" From the time this tuck place till after the 'sizes, there wasn't a stir among them on any side ; but when they wor over, the boys began to prepare. Denis—heavens be his bed—was there in his glory. This was in the spring 'sizes, and the May fair soon followed. Ah ! that was the bloody sight, I'm tould—for I wasn't at it—atween the Orangemen and them. The Ribbonmen wor bate, though, but not till after there was a desperate fight on both sides. I was tould that Denis Kelly that day knocked down five-and-twenty men in about three-quarters of an hour ; and only that long John Grimes hot him a *polthoge* on the sconce with the butt-end of the gun, it was thought the Orangemen would be beat. That

blow broke his skull, and was the manes of his death. He was carried home senseless."

"Well, Lachlin," said my brother, "if you didn't see it, I did. I happened to be looking out of John Carson's upper window; for it wasn't altogether safe to contemplate it within reach of the missiles. It was certainly a dreadful and a barbarous sight. You have often observed the calm, gloomy silence that precedes a thunderstorm; and had you been there that day you might have seen it illustrated in a scene much more awful. The thick, living mass of people extended from the corner-house, nearly a quarter of a mile, at this end of the town, up to the parsonage on the other side. During the early part of the day every kind of business was carried on in a hurry and an impatience which denoted the little chance they knew there would be for transacting it in the evening.

"Up to the hour of four o'clock the fair was unusually quiet, and, on the whole, presented nothing in any way remarkable; but after that hour you might observe the busy stir and hum of the mass settling down into a deep, brooding, portentous silence, that was absolutely fearful. The females, with dismay and terror pictured in their faces, hurried home; and in various instances you might see mothers, and wives, and sisters clinging about the sons, husbands, and brothers, attempting to drag them by main force from the danger which they knew impended over them. In this they seldom succeeded; for the person so urged was usually compelled to tear himself from them by superior strength.

"The pedlars, and basket-women, and such as had tables and standings erected in the streets, commenced removing them with all possible haste. The shopkeepers

and other inhabitants of the town put up their shutters, in order to secure their windows from being shattered. Strangers who were compelled to stop in town that night took shelter in the inns and other houses of entertainment where they lodged ; so that about five o'clock the street was completely clear and free for action.

" Hitherto there was not a stroke—the scene became even more silent and gloomy, although the moral darkness of their ill-suppressed passions was strongly contrasted with the splendour of the sun, that poured down a tide of golden light upon the multitude. This contrast between the natural brightness of the evening and the internal gloom of their hearts, as the beams of the sun rested upon the ever-moving crowd, would, to any man who knew the impetuosity with which the spirit of religious hatred was soon to rage among them, produce novel and singular sensations. For, after all, Toby, there is a mysterious connection between natural and moral things, which often invests both nature and sentiment with a feeling that certainly would not come home to our hearts if such a connection did not exist. A rose-tree beside a grave will lead us from sentiment to reflection ; and any other association where a painful or melancholy thought is clothed with a garb of joy or pleasure will strike us more deeply in proportion as the contrast is strong. On seeing the sun or moon struggling through the darkness of surrounding clouds, I confess, although you may smile, that I feel for the moment a diminution of enjoyment—something taken, as it were, from the sum of my happiness.

" Ere the quarrel commenced, you might see a dark and hateful glare scowling from the countenances of the two parties as they viewed and approached each other

in the street—the eye was set in deadly animosity, and the face marked with an ireful paleness, occasioned at once by revenge and apprehension. Groups were silently hurrying with an eager and energetic step to their places of rendezvous, grasping their weapons more closely, or grinding their teeth in the impatience of their fury. The veterans on each side were surrounded by their respective followers, anxious to act under their direction; and the very boys seemed to be animated with a martial spirit much more eager than that of those who had greater experience in party quarrels.

"Jem Finigan's public-house was the headquarters and rallying-point of the Ribbonmen; the Orangemen assembled in that of Joe Sherlock, the master of an Orange-lodge. About six o'clock the crowd in the street began gradually to fall off to the opposite ends of the town—the Roman Catholics towards the north, the Protestants towards the south. Carson's window, from which I was observing their motions, was exactly half-way between them, so that I had a distinct view of both. At this moment I noticed Denis Kelly coming forward from the closely condensed mass formed by the Ribbonmen; he advanced, with his cravat off, to the middle of the vacant space between the parties, holding a fine oak cudgel in his hand. He then stopped, and, addressing the Orangemen, said—

"'Where's Vengeance and his crew now? Is there any single Orange villain among you that dare come down and meet me here like a man? Is John Grimes there? for if he is, before we begin to take you out of a face—to hunt you altogether out of the town, ye Orange villains—I would be glad that he'd step down to Denis Kelly here for two or three minutes—I'll not keep him longer.'

"There was now a stir and a murmur among the Orangemen, as if a rush was about to take place towards Denis; but Grimes, whom I saw endeavouring to curb them in, left the crowd and advanced towards him.

"At this moment an instinctive movement among both masses took place; so that when Grimes had come within a few yards of Kelly, both parties were within two or three perches of them. Kelly was standing apparently off his guard, with one hand thrust carelessly into the breast of his waistcoat, and the cudgel in the other; but his eye was fixed calmly upon Grimes as he approached. They were both powerful, fine men—brawny, vigorous, and active. Grimes had somewhat the advantage of the other in height; he also fought with his left hand, from which circumstance he was nicknamed *Kitthogue*. He was a man of a dark, stern-looking countenance; and the tones of his voice were deep, sullen, and of appalling strength.

"As they approached each other, the windows on each side of the street were crowded; but there was not a breath to be heard in any direction, nor from either party. As for myself, my heart palpitated with anxiety. What they might have felt I do not know; but they must both have experienced considerable apprehension; for, as they were the champions of their respective parties, and had never before met in single encounter, their characters depended on the issue of the contest.

"'Well, Grimes,' said Denis, 'sure, I've often wished for this same meetin', man, betune myself and you; I have what you're going to get in for you this long time; but you'll get it now, *avick*, plase God.'

"'It was not to scould I came, you Popish, ribley

rascal,' replied Grimes, 'but to give you what you're long——'

"Ere the word had been out of his mouth, however, Kelly sprung over to him; and, making a feint, as if he intended to lay the stick on his ribs, he swung it past without touching him, and bringing it round his own head like lightning, made it tell with a powerful back-stroke right on Grimes's temple, and in an instant his own face was sprinkled with the blood which sprung from the wound. Grimes staggered forward towards his antagonist; seeing which, Kelly sprung back, and was again meeting him with full force, when Grimes, turning a little, clutched Kelly's stick in his right hand, and, being left-handed himself, ere the other could wrench the cudgel from him, he gave him a terrible blow upon the back part of the head, which laid Kelly in the dust.

"There was then a deafening shout from the Orange party; and Grimes stood until Kelly should be in the act of rising, ready then to give him another blow. The coolness and generalship of Kelly, however, were here very remarkable; for, when he was just getting to his feet, 'Look at your party coming down upon me!' he exclaimed to Grimes, who turned round to order them back, and in the interim Kelly was upon his legs.

"I was surprised at the coolness of both men; for Grimes was by no means inflated with the boisterous triumph of his party, nor did Denis get into a blind rage on being knocked down. They approached again, their eyes kindled into savage fury, tamed down into the wariness of experienced combatants; for a short time they stood eyeing each other, as if calculating upon the contingent advantages of attack or defence. This was

a moment of great interest; for, as their huge and powerful frames stood out in opposition, strung and dilated by passion, and the energy of contest, no judgment, however experienced, could venture to anticipate the result of the battle, or name the person likely to be victorious. Indeed, it was surprising how the natural sagacity of these men threw their movements into scientific form and elegance. Kelly raised his cudgel, and placed it transversely in the air between himself and his opponent; Grimes instantly placed his against it—both weapons thus forming a St. Andrew's cross—whilst the men themselves stood foot to foot, calm and collected. Nothing could be finer than their proportions, nor superior to their respective attitudes: their broad chests were in a line; their thick, well-set necks laid a little back, as were their bodies—without, however losing their balance; and their fierce but calm features grimly but placidly scowling at each other, like men who were prepared for the onset.

"At length Kelly made an attempt to repeat his former feint with variations; for, whereas he had sent the first blow to Grimes's right temple, he took measures now to reach the left. His action was rapid, but equally quick was the eye of his antagonist, whose cudgel was up in ready guard to meet the blow. It met it; and with such surprising power was it sent and opposed that both cudgels, on meeting, bent across each other into curves. An involuntary huzza followed this from their respective parties—not so much on account of the skill displayed by the combatants, as in admiration of their cudgels, and of the judgment with which they must have been selected. In fact, it was the staves rather than the men that were praised; and certainly the former did their

duty. In a moment their *shillelaghs* were across each other once more, and the men resumed their former attitudes. Their savage determination, their kindled eyes, the blood which disfigured the face of Grimes, and begrimed also the countenance of his antagonist into a deeper expression of ferocity, occasioned many a cowardly heart to shrink from the sight. There they stood, gory and stern, ready for the next onset. It was first made by Grimes, who tried to practise on Kelly the feint which Kelly had before practised on him. Denis, after his usual manner, caught the blow in his open hand, and clutched the staff with an intention of holding it until he might visit Grimes—now apparently unguarded —with a levelling blow; but Grimes's effort to wrest the cudgel from his grasp drew all Kelly's strength to that quarter, and prevented him from availing himself of the other's defenceless attitude. A trial of muscular power ensued, and their enormous bodily strength was exhibited in the stiff tug for victory. Kelly's address prevailed; for, while Grimes pulled against him with all his collected vigour, the former suddenly let go his hold, and the latter, having lost his balance, staggered back. Lightning could not be more quick than the action of Kelly, as, with tremendous force, his cudgel rung on the unprotected head of Grimes, who fell, or rather was shot to the ground, as if some superior power had dashed him against it; and there he lay for a short time quivering under the blow he had received.

"A peal of triumph now arose from Kelly's party; but Kelly himself, placing his arms akimbo, stood calmly over his enemy, awaiting his return to the conflict. For nearly five minutes he stood in this attitude, during which time Grimes did not stir; at length Kelly

stooped a little, and, peering closely into his face, exclaimed—

"'Why, then, is it acting you are? Anyhow, I wouldn't put it past you, you cunning vagabone—'tis lying to take breath he is. Get up, man; I'd scorn to touch you till you're on your legs—not all as one, for, sure, it's yourself would show me no such forbearance. Up with you, man alive; I've none of your own thrachery in me. I'll not rise my cudgel till you're on your guard.'

"There was an expression of disdain mingled with a glow of honest, manly generosity on his countenance as he spoke, which made him at once the favourite with such spectators as were not connected with either of the parties. Grimes arose; and it was evident that Kelly's generosity deepened his resentment more than the blow which had sent him so rapidly to the ground. However, he was still cool, but his brows knit, his eye flashed with double fierceness, and his complexion settled into a dark-blue shade, which gave to his whole visage an expression fearfully ferocious. Kelly hailed this as the first appearance of passion; his brow expanded as the other approached, and a dash of confidence, if not of triumph, softened in some degree the sternness of his features.

"With caution, they encountered again, each collected for a spring, their eyes gleaming at each other like those of tigers. Grimes made a motion as if he would have struck Kelly with his fist; and as the latter threw up his guard against the blow, he received a stroke from Grimes's cudgel on the under part of the right arm. This had been directed at his elbow, with an intention of rendering the arm powerless; it fell short, however, yet was sufficient to relax the grasp which Kelly held of his

weapon. Had Kelly been a novice, this stratagem alone would have soon vanquished him ; his address, however, was fully equal to that of his antagonist. The staff dropped instantly from his grasp, but a stout thong of black, polished leather, with a shining tassel at the end of it, had bound it securely to his massive wrist ; the cudgel, therefore, only dangled from his arm, and did not, as the other expected, fall to the ground, or put Denis to the necessity of stooping for it—Grimes's object being to have struck him in that attitude.

" A flash of indignation now shot from Kelly's eye, and, with the speed of lightning, he sprung within Grimes's weapon, determined to wrest it from him. The grapple that ensued was gigantic. In a moment Grimes's staff was parallel with the horizon between them, clutched in the powerful grasp of both. They stood exactly opposite, and rather close to each other ; their arms sometimes stretched out stiff and at full length, again contracted, until their faces, glowing and distorted by the energy of the contest, were drawn almost together. Sometimes the prevailing strength of one would raise the staff slowly, and with gradually developed power, up in a perpendicular position ; again, the reaction of opposing strength would strain it back, and sway the weighty frame of the antagonist, crouched and set into desperate resistance, along with it ; whilst the hard pebbles under their feet were crumbled into powder, and the very street itself furrowed into gravel by the shock of their opposing strength. Indeed, so well matched a pair never met in contest ; their strength, their wind, their activity, and their natural science appeared to be perfectly equal.

" At length, by a tremendous effort, Kelly got the staff

twisted nearly out of Grimes's hand, and a short shout, half encouraging, half indignant, came from Grimes's party. This added shame to his other passions, and threw an impulse of almost superhuman strength into him: he recovered his advantage, but nothing more; they twisted—they heaved their great frames against each other—they struggled—their action became rapid—they swayed each other this way and that—their eyes like fire, their teeth locked, and their nostrils dilated. Sometimes they twined about each other like serpents, and twirled round with such rapidity that it was impossible to distinguish them; sometimes, when a pull of more than ordinary power took place, they seemed to cling together almost without motion, bending down until their heads nearly touched the ground, their cracking joints seeming to stretch by the effort, and the muscles of their limbs standing out from the flesh, strung in amazing tension.

"In this attitude were they, when Denis, with the eye of a hawk, spied a disadvantage in Grimes's position; he wheeled round, placed his broad shoulder against the shaggy breast of the other, and giving him what is called an 'inside crook,' strained him, despite of every effort, until he fairly got him on his shoulder, and off the point of resistance. There was a cry of alarm from the windows, particularly from the females, as Grimes's huge body was swung over Kelly's shoulder, until it came down in a crash upon the hard gravel of the street, while Denis stood in triumph, with his enemy's staff in his hand. A loud huzza followed this from all present, except the Orangemen, who stood bristling with fury and shame for the temporary defeat of their champion.

"Denis again had his enemy at his mercy, but he

scorned to use his advantage ungenerously; he went over, and placing his staff in his hands—for the other had got to his legs—retrograded to his place, and desired Grimes to defend himself.

"After considerable manœuvring on both sides, Denis, who appeared to be the more active of the two, got an open on his antagonist, and, by a powerful blow upon Grimes's ear, sent him to the ground with amazing force. I never saw such a blow given by mortal: the end of the cudgel came exactly upon the ear, and, as Grimes went down, the blood spurted out of his mouth and nostrils; he then kicked convulsively several times as he lay upon the ground, and that moment I really thought he would never have breathed more.

"The shout was again raised by the Ribbonmen, who threw up their hats, and bounded from the ground with the most vehement exultation. Both parties then waited to give Grimes time to rise and renew the battle; but he appeared perfectly contented to remain where he was, for there appeared no signs of life or motion in him.

"'Have you got your gruel, boy?' said Kelly, going over to where he lay. 'Well, you met Denis Kelly at last, didn't you? and there you lie; but, plase God, the most of your sort will soon lie in the same state. Come, boys,' said Kelly, addressing his own party, 'now for bloody Vengeance and his crew, that thransported the M'Guigans and the Caffries, and murdered Collier. Now, boys, have at the murderers, and let us have satisfaction for all!'

"A mutual rush instantly took place; but ere the Orangemen came down to where Grimes lay, Kelly had taken his staff and handed it to one of his own party.

It is impossible to describe the scene that ensued. The noise of the blows, the shouting, the yelling, the groans, the scalped heads and gory visages gave both to the eye and the ear an impression that could not easily be forgotten. The battle was obstinately maintained on both sides for nearly an hour, and, with a skill of manœuvring, attack, and retreat that was astonishing.

"Both parties arranged themselves against each other, forming something like two lines of battle, and these extended along the town nearly from one end to the other. It was curious to remark the difference in the persons and appearances of the combatants. In the Orange line the men were taller and of more powerful frames; but the Ribbonmen were more hardy, active, and courageous. Man to man, notwithstanding their superior bodily strength, the Orangemen could never fight the others; the former depend too much upon their fire- and side-arms, but they are by no means so well trained to the use of the cudgel as their enemies. In the district where the scene of this fight is laid, the Catholics generally inhabit the mountainous part of the country, to which, when the civil feuds of worse times prevailed, they had been driven at the point of the bayonet; the Protestants and Presbyterians, on the other hand, who came in upon their possessions, occupy the richer and more fertile tracts of the land, living, of course, more wealthily, with less labour, and on better food. The characteristic features produced by these causes are such as might be expected—the Catholic being, like his soil, hardy, thin, and capable of bearing all weathers; and the Protestants, larger, softer and more inactive.

"Their advance to the first onset was far different from a faction fight. There existed a silence here that

powerfully evinced the inextinguishable animosity with which they encountered. For some time they fought in two compact bodies, that remained unbroken so long as the chances of victory were doubtful. Men went down and were up, and went down in all directions with uncommom rapidity ; and, as the weighty phalanx of Orangemen stood out against the nimble line of their mountain adversaries, the intrepid spirit of the latter, and their surprising skill and activity, soon gave symptoms of a gradual superiority in the conflict. In the course of about half an hour the Orange party began to give way in the northern end of the town ; and, as their opponents pressed them warmly and with unsparing hand, the heavy mass formed by their numbers began to break, and this decomposition ran up their line, until in a short time they were thrown into utter confusion. They now fought in detached parties ; but these subordinate conflicts, though shorter in duration than the shock of the general battle, were much more inhuman and destructive ; for, whenever any particular gang succeeded in putting their adversaries to flight, they usually ran to the assistance of their friends in the nearest fight—by which means they often fought three to one.

" There lived a short distance out of the town a man nicknamed Jemmy *Boccagh*, on account of his lameness—he was also sometimes called ' Hip-an'-go-constant '—who fell the first victim to party spirit. He had got arms on seeing his friends likely to be defeated, and had the hardihood to follow, with charged bayonet, a few Ribbonmen, whom he attempted to intercept as they fled from a large number of their enemies who had got them separated from their comrades. *Boccagh* ran across a field, in order to get before them on the road, and

was in the act of climbing a ditch, when one of them, who carried a spade-shaft, struck him a blow on the head which put an end to his existence.

"This circumstance imparted, of course, fiercer hatred to both parties—triumph inspiring the one, a thirst for vengeance nerving the other. Kelly inflicted tremendous punishment in every direction; for scarcely a blow fell from him which did not bring a man to the ground. It absolutely resembled a military engagement, for the number of combatants amounted at least to two thousand men. In many places the street was covered with small pools and clots of blood which flowed from those who lay insensible; while others were borne away bleeding, groaning, or staggering, having been battered into a total unconsciousness of the scene about them.

"At length the Orangemen gave way, and their enemies, yelling with madness and revenge, began to beat them with unrestrained fury. The former, finding that they could not resist the impetuous tide which burst upon them, fled back past the church, and stopped not until they had reached an elevation, on which lay two or three heaps of stones that had been collected for the purpose of paving the streets. Here they made a stand, and commenced a vigorous discharge of them against their pursuers. This checked the latter; and the others, seeing them hesitate, and likely to retreat from the missiles, pelted them with such effect that the tables became turned, and the Ribbonmen made a speedy flight back into the town.

"In the meantime several Orangemen had gone into Sherlock's, where a considerable number of arms had been deposited, with an intention of resorting to them in case of a defeat at the cudgels. These now came out,

and met the Ribbonmen on their flight from those who were pelting them with the stones. A dreadful scene ensued. The Ribbonmen, who had the advantage in numbers, finding themselves intercepted before by those who had arms, and pursued behind by those who had recourse to the stones, fought with uncommon bravery and desperation. Kelly, who was furious, but still collected and decisive, shouted out in Irish, lest the opposite party might understand him, 'Let every two men seize upon one of those who have the arms.'

"This was attempted, and effected with partial success; and I have no doubt but the Orangemen would have been ultimately beaten and deprived of their weapons, were it not that many of them who had got their pistols out of Sherlock's discharged them among their enemies, and wounded several. The Catholics could not stand this; but, wishing to retaliate as effectually as possible, lifted stones wherever they could find them, and kept up the fight at a distance as they retreated. On both sides, wherever a solitary foe was caught straggling from the rest, he was instantly punished.

"It was just about this time that I saw Kelly engaged with two men, whom he kept at bay with great ease—retrograding, however, as he fought, towards his own party. Grimes, who had some time before this recovered and joined the fight once more, was returning, after having pursued several of the Ribbonmen past the market-house, where he spied Kelly thus engaged. With a volunteer gun in his hand, and furious with the degradation of his former defeat, he ran over and struck him with the butt end of it upon the temple, and Denis fell. When the stroke was given, an involuntary cry of 'Murder—foul, foul!' burst from those who looked

on from the windows, and long John Steele, Grimes's father-in-law, in indignation, raised his cudgel to knock him down for this treacherous and malignant blow; but a person out of Neal Cassidy's back-yard hurled a round stone, about six pounds in weight, at Grimes's head, that felled him to the earth, leaving him as insensible and nearly in as dangerous a state as Kelly, for his jaw was broken.

"By this time the Catholics had retreated out of the town, and Denis might probably have received more punishment had those who were returning from the pursuit recognised him; but James Wilson, seeing the dangerous situation in which he lay, came out, and, with the assistance of his servant-man, brought him into his own house. When the Orangemen had driven their adversaries off the field, they commenced the most hideous yellings through the streets—got music and played party tunes—offered any money for the face of a Papist; and any of that religion who were so unfortunate as to make their appearance were beaten in the most relentless manner. It was precisely the same thing on the part of the Ribbonmen: if a Protestant, but, above all, an Orangeman, came in their way, he was sure to be treated with barbarity—for the retaliation on either side was dreadfully unjust, the innocent suffering as well as the guilty. Leaving the window, I found Kelly in a bad state below stairs.

"'What's to be done?' said I to Wilson.

"'I know not,' replied he, 'except I put him between us on my jaunting car and drive him home.'

"This appeared decidedly the best plan we could adopt; so, after putting to the horse, we placed him on

the car, sitting one on each side of him, and in this manner left him at his own house."

"Did you run no risk," said I, "in going among Kelly's friends whilst they were under the influence of party feeling and exasperated passion?"

"No," said he; "we had rendered many of them acts of kindness, and had never exhibited any spirit but a friendly one towards them; and such individuals, but only such, might walk through a crowd of enraged Catholics or Protestants quite unmolested.

"The next morning Kelly's landlord and two magistrates were at his house; but he lay like a log, without sense or motion. Whilst they were there the surgeon arrived, and, after examining his head, declared that the skull was fractured. During that and the following day the house was surrounded by crowds, anxious to know his state; and nothing might be heard amongst most of them but loud and undisguised expressions of the most ample revenge. The wife was frantic, and, on seeing me, hid her face in her hands, exclaiming—

"'Ah, sir, I knew it would come to this; and you, too, tould him the same thing. My curse and God's curse on it for quarrelling! Will it never stop in the counthry till they rise some time and murdher one another out of the face!'

"As soon as the swelling in his head was reduced, the surgeon performed the operation of trepanning, and thereby saved his life; but his strength and intellect were gone, and he just lingered for four months, a feeble, drivelling simpleton, until, in consequence of a cold, which produced inflammation in the brain, he died, as hundreds have died, the victim of party spirit."

Such was the account which I heard of my old schoolfellow, Denis Kelly ; and, indeed, when I reflected upon the nature of the education he received, I could not but admit that the consequences were such as might naturally be expected to result from it.

The next morning a relation of Mrs. Kelly's came down to my brother, hoping that, as they wished to have as decent a funeral as possible, he would be so kind as to attend it.

" *Musha*, God knows, sir," said the man, " it's poor Denis—heavens be his bed—that had the regard and reverence for every one, young and ould, of your father's family ; and it's himself that would be the proud man, if he was living, to see you, sir, riding after his coffin."

" Well," said my brother, " let Mrs. Kelly know that I shall certainly attend, and so will my brother here, who has come to pay me a visit. Why, I believe, Tom, you forget him ! "

" Your brother, sir ! Is it Masther Toby, that used to cudgel the half of the counthry when he was at school ? Gad's my life, Masther Toby (I was now about thirty-six), but it's your four quarters, sure enough ! *Arrah*, thin, sir, who'd think it—you're grown so full and stout —but, faix, you'd always the bone in you ! Ah, Masther Toby ! " said he, " he's lying cowld this morning that would be the happy man to lay his eyes wanst more upon you. Many an' many's the winther's evening did he spind talking about the time when you and he were *bouchals* together, and of the pranks you played at school, but especially of the time you both leathered the four Grogans and tuck the apples from them—my poor

fellow!—and now to be stretched a corpse, lavin' his poor widdy and childher behind him!"

I accordingly expressed my sorrow for Denis's death, which, indeed, I sincerely regretted, for he possessed materials for an excellent character, had not all that was amiable and good in him been permitted to run wild.

As soon as my trunk and travelling-bag had been brought from the inn where I had left them the preceding night, we got our horses, and, as we wished to show particular respect to Denis's remains, rode up, with some of our friends, to the house. When we approached, there were large crowds of the country-people before the door of his well-thatched and respectable-looking dwelling, which had three chimneys, and a set of sash-windows, clean and well glazed. On our arrival I was soon recognised and surrounded by numbers of those to whom I had formerly been known, who received and welcomed me with a warmth and kindness and sincerity which it would be in vain to look for among the peasantry of any other nation.

Indeed, I have uniformly observed that when no religious or political feeling influences the heart and principles of an Irish peasant, he is singularly sincere and faithful in his attachments, and has always a bias to the generous and the disinterested. To my own knowledge, circumstances frequently occur in which the ebullition of party spirit is altogether temporary, subsiding after the cause that produced it has passed away, and leaving the kind peasant to the naturally affectionate and generous impulses of his character. But poor Paddy, unfortunately, is as combustible a material in politics or religion as in fighting—thinking it his duty

to take the weak side, without any other consideration than because it is the weak side.

When we entered the house I was almost suffocated with the strong fumes of tobacco-smoke, snuff and whisky; and, as I had been an old school-fellow of Denis's, my appearance was the signal for a general burst of grief among his relations, in which the more distant friends and neighbours of the deceased joined, to keep up the *keening*.

I have often, indeed always, felt that there is something extremely touching in the Irish cry; in fact, that it breathes the very spirit of wild and natural sorrow. The Irish peasantry, whenever a death takes place, are exceedingly happy in seizing upon any contingent circumstances that may occur, and making them subservient to the excitement of grief for the departed, or the exultation and praise of his character and virtues. My entrance was a proof of this—I had scarcely advanced to the middle of the floor, when my intimacy with the deceased, our boyish sports, and even our quarrels, were adverted to with a natural eloquence and pathos that, in spite of my firmness, occasioned me to feel the prevailing sorrow. They spoke, or chanted mournfully, in Irish; but the substance of what they said was as follows:—

"Oh, Denis, Denis, *avourneen!* you're lying low this morning of sorrow!—lying low are you, and does not know who it is [alluding to me] that is standing over you, weeping for the days you spent together in your youth! It's yourself, *acushla agus asthore machree* (the pulse and beloved of my heart), that would stretch out the right hand warmly to welcome him to the place of his birth, where you had both been so often happy about the green

hills and valleys with each other! He's here now, standing over you; and it's he, of all his family, kind and respectable as they are, that was your own favourite, Denis, *avourneen dheelish!* He alone was the companion that you loved!—with no other could you be happy! For him did you fight when he wanted a friend in your young quarrels! And, if you had a dispute with him, were you not sorry for it? Are you not now stretched in death before him, and will he not forgive you?"

All this was uttered, of course, extemporaneously, and without the least preparation. They then passed on to an enumeration of his virtues as a father, a husband, son, and brother—specified his worth as he stood related to society in general, and his kindness as a neighbour and a friend.

An occurrence now took place which may serve in some measure to throw light upon many of the atrocities and outrages which take place in Ireland. Before I mention it, however, I think it necessary to make a few observations relative to it. I am convinced that those who are intimately acquainted with the Irish peasantry will grant that there is not on the earth a class of people in whom the domestic affections of blood-relationship are so pure, strong, and sacred. The birth of a child will occasion a poor man to break in upon the money set apart for his landlord, in order to keep the christening among his friends and neighbours with due festivity. A marriage exhibits a spirit of joy, an exuberance of happiness and delight, to be found only in the Green Island; and the death of a member of a family is attended with a sincerity of grief scarcely to be expected from men so much the creatures of the more mirthful feelings. In fact, their sorrow is a solecism in humanity—at once

deep and loud—mingled up, even in its greatest paroxysms, with a laughter-loving spirit. It is impossible that an Irishman, sunk in the lowest depths of affliction, could permit his grief to flow in all the sad solemnity of affliction, even for a day, without some glimpse of his natural humour throwing a faint and rapid light over the gloom within him. No ; there is an amalgamation of sentiments in his mind which, as I said before, would puzzle any philosopher to account for. Yet it would be wrong to say, though his grief has something of an unsettled and ludicrous character about it, that he is incapable of the most subtle and delicate shades of sentiment, or the deepest and most desolating intensity of sorrow. But he laughs off those heavy vapours which hang about the moral constitution of the people of other nations, giving them a morbid habit which leaves them neither strength nor firmness to resist calamity, which they feel less keenly than an Irishman, exactly as a healthy man will feel the pangs of death with more acuteness than one who is wasted away by debility and decay. Let any man witness an emigration, and he will satisfy himself that this is true. I am convinced that Goldsmith's inimitable description of one in his " Deserted Village " was a picture drawn from actual observation. Let him observe the emigrant as he crosses the Atlantic, and he will find, although he joins the jest, and the laugh, and the song, that he will seek a silent corner or a silent hour to indulge the sorrow which he still feels for the friends, the companions, and the native fields that he has left behind him. This constitution of mind is beneficial ; the Irishman seldom or never hangs himself, because he is capable of too much real feeling to permit himself to become the slave of that which is factitious.

There is no void in his affections or sentiments which a morbid and depraved sensibility could occupy; but his feelings, of what character soever they may be, are strong because they are fresh and healthy. For this reason I maintain that when the domestic affections come under the influence of either grief or joy the peasantry of no nation are capable of feeling so deeply. Even on the ordinary occasions of death, sorrow, though it alternates with mirth and cheerfulness in a manner peculiar to themselves, lingers long in the unseen recesses of domestic life; any hand, therefore, whether by law or violence, that plants a wound *here*, will suffer to the death.

When my brother and I entered the house the body had just been put into the coffin; and it is usual after this takes place, and before it is nailed down, for the immediate relatives of the family to embrace the deceased, and take their last look and farewell of his remains. In the present instance the children were brought over, one by one, to perform that trying and melancholy ceremony. The first was an infant on the breast, whose little innocent mouth was held down to that of its dead father; the babe smiled upon his still and solemn features, and would have played with his grave-clothes, but that the murmur of unfeigned sorrow which burst from all present occasioned it to be removed. The next was a fine little girl of three or four years, who inquired where they were going to bring her daddy, and asked if he would not soon come back to her.

"My daddy's sleepin' a long time," said the child, "but I'll waken him till he sings me 'Peggy Slevin.' I like my daddy best, bekase I sleep wid him; and he brings me good things from the fair—he bought me

this ribbon," said she, pointing to a ribbon which he had purchased for her.

The rest of the children were sensible of their loss, and, truly, it was a distressing scene. His eldest son and daughter, the former about fourteen, the latter about two years older, lay on the coffin, kissing his lips, and were with difficulty torn away from it.

" Oh ! " said the boy, " he is going from us, and night or day we will never see him or hear of him more ! Oh ! father—father—is that the last sight we are ever to see of your face ? Why, father dear, did you die, and leave us for ever—for ever ? Wasn't your heart good to us, and your words kind to us ? Oh ! your last smile is smiled —your last kiss given—and your last kind word spoken to your childher that you loved, and that loved you as we did. Father, core of my heart, are you gone for ever, and your voice departed ? Oh ! the murdherers —oh ! the murdherers, the murdherers ! " he exclaimed, " that killed my father ; for only for them he would be still wid us—but, by the God that's over me, if I live, night or day I will not rest till I have blood for blood ; nor do I care who hears it, nor if I was hanged the next minute."

As these words escaped him, a deep and awful murmur of suppressed vengeance burst from his relations. At length their sorrow became too strong to be repressed ; and, as it was the time to take their last embrace and look of him, they came up, and, after fixing their eyes on his face in deep affliction, their lips began to quiver, and their countenances became convulsed. They then burst out simultaneously into a tide of violent grief, which, after having indulged in it for some time, they checked. But the resolution of revenge was stronger

than their grief, for, standing over his dead body, they repeated, almost word for word, the vow of vengeance which the son had just sworn. It was really a scene dreadfully and terribly solemn ; and I could not avoid reflecting upon the mystery of nature, which can, from the deep power of domestic affection, cause to spring a determination to crime of so black a dye. Would to God that our peasantry had a clearer sense of moral and religious duties, and were not left so much as they are to the headlong impulse of an ardent temperament and an impetuous character ; and would to God that the clergy who superintend their education and morals had a better knowledge of human nature !

During all this time the heart-broken widow sat beyond the coffin, looking upon what passed with a stupid sense of bereavement ; and when they had all performed this last ceremony it was found necessary to tell her that the time was come for the procession of the funeral, and that they only waited for her to take, as the rest did, her last look and embrace of her husband. When she heard this it pierced her like an arrow : she became instantly collected, and her complexion assumed a dark, sallow shade of despairing anguish, which it was an affliction even to look upon. She then stooped over the coffin, and kissed him several times, after which she ceased sobbing, and lay silently with her mouth to his.

The character of a faithful wife sorrowing for a beloved husband has that in it which compels both respect and sympathy. There was not at this moment a dry eye in the house. She still lay silent on the coffin ; but, as I observed that her bosom seemed not to heave as it did a little before, I was convinced that she had become

insensible. I accordingly beckoned to Kelly's brother, to whom I mentioned what I had suspected ; and on his going over to ascertain the truth, he found her as I had said. She was then brought to the air, and, after some trouble, recovered ; but I recommended them to put her to bed, and not to subject her to any unnecessary anguish by a custom which was really too soul-piercing to endure. This, however, was, in her opinion, the violation of an old rite sacred to her heart and affections—she would not hear of it for an instant. Again she was helped out between her brother and brother-in-law ; and after stooping down and doing as the others had done—

" Now," said she, " I will sit here, and keep him under my eye as long as I can—surely you won't blame me for it ; you all know the kind husband he was to me, and the good right I have to be sorry for him ! Oh ! " she added, " is it thrue at all ?—is he, my own Denis, the young husband of my airly love, in good arnest, dead, and going to leave me here—me, Denis, that you loved so tindherly, and our childher that your brow was never clouded against ? Can I believe myself, or is it a dhrame ? Denis, *avick machree ! avick machree !* your hand was dreaded, and a good right it had, for it was the manly hand, that was ever and always raised in defence of them that wanted a friend ; abroad, in the faction fight, against the oppressor, your name was ever feared, *acushla !*—but at home—AT HOME—where was your fellow ? Denis, *achora*, do you know the lips that's spaking to you ?—your young bride—your heart's light. Oh ! I remimber the day you wor married to me like yesterday. Oh ! *avourneen*, then and since wasn't the heart of your own Honor bound up in you—yet not a word even to me. Well, *agra machree*, 'tisn't your

fault; it's the first time you ever refused to spake to your own Honor. But you're dead, *avourneen*, or it wouldn't be so—you're dead before my eyes, husband of my heart, and all my hopes and happiness goes into the coffin and the grave along wid you for ever!"

All this time she was rocking herself from side to side, her complexion pale and ghastly as could be conceived. When the coffin was about to be closed, she retired until it was nailed down; after which she returned with her bonnet and cloak on her, ready to accompany it to the grave. I was astonished, for I thought she could not have walked two steps without assistance; but it was the custom, and to neglect it, I found, would have thrown the imputation of insincerity upon her grief. While they were preparing to bring the coffin out, I could hear the chat and conversation of those who were standing in crowds before the door, and occasionally a loud vacant laugh, and sometimes a volley of them, responsive to the jokes of some rustic wit, probably the same person who acted as master of the revels at the wake.

Before the coffin was finally closed, Ned Corrigan, whom I had put to flight the preceding night, came up, and repeated the *De profundis* in very strange Latin over the corpse. When this was finished, he got a jug of holy water, and, after dipping his thumb in it, first made the sign of the cross upon his own forehead, and afterwards sprinkled it upon all present, giving my brother and myself an extra complement, supposing, probably, that we stood most in need of it. When this was over, he sprinkled the corpse and the coffin in particular most profusely. He then placed two pebbles from Lough

Derg, and a bit of holy candle, upon the breast of the corpse, and, having said a *Pater* and *Ave*, in which he was joined by the people, he closed the lid and nailed it down

"Ned," said his brother, "are his feet and toes loose?"

"*Musha*, but that's more than myself knows," replied Ned. "Are they, Katty?" said he, inquiring from the sister of the deceased.

"*Arrah*, to be sure, *avourneen*, answered Katty. "Did you think we would lave him to be tied that a-way when he'd be risin' out of his last bed? Wouldn't it be too bad to have his toes tied thin, *avourneen?*"

The coffin was then brought out and placed upon four chairs before the door to be keened; and in the meantime the friends and well-wishers of the deceased were brought into the room to get each a glass of whisky as a token of respect. I observed also that such as had not seen any of Kelly's relations until then came up, and, shaking hands with them, said, "I'm sorry for your loss!" This expression of condolence was uniform, and the usual reply was, "Thank you, Mat, or Jim!" with a pluck of the skirts, accompanied by a significant nod to follow. They then got a due share of whisky; and it was curious, after they came out, their faces a little flushed, and their eyes watery with the strong, ardent spirits, to hear with what heartiness and alacrity they entered into Denis's praises.

When he had been keened in the street, there being no hearse, the coffin was placed upon two hand-spikes, which were fixed across, but parallel to each other, under it. These were borne by four men, one at the end of

each, with the point of it touching his body a little below his stomach—in other parts of Ireland the coffin is borne on the shoulders, but this is more convenient and less distressing.

When we got out upon the road the funeral was of great extent, for Kelly had been highly respected. On arriving at the *merin* which bounded the land he had owned, the coffin was laid down, and a loud and wailing *keena* took place over it. It was again raised, and the funeral proceeded in a direction which I was surprised to see it take, and it was not until an acquaintance of my brother's had explained the matter that I understood the cause of it. In Ireland, when a murder is perpetrated, it is usual, as the funeral proceeds to the graveyard, to bring the corpse to the house of him who committed the crime, and lay it down at his door, while the relations of the deceased kneel down, and with an appalling solemnity utter the deepest imprecations, and invoke the justice of Heaven on the head of the murderer. This, however, is usually omitted if the residence of the criminal be completely out of the line of the funeral; but if it be possible by any circuit to approach it, this dark ceremony is never omitted. In cases where the crime is doubtful or unjustly imputed, those who are thus visited come out, and, laying their right hand upon the coffin, protest their innocence of the blood of the deceased, calling God to witness the truth of their asseverations; but in cases where the crime is clearly proved against the murderer, the door is either closed, the ceremony repelled by violence, or the house abandoned by the inmates until the funeral passes.

The death of Kelly, however, could not be actually, or at least directly, considered a murder, for it was

probable that Grimes did not inflict the stroke with an intention of taking away his life, and, besides, Kelly survived it four months. Grimes's house was not more than fifteen perches from the road ; and when the corpse was opposite the little bridle-way that led up to it, they laid it down for a moment, and the relations of Kelly surrounded it, offering up a short prayer with uncovered heads. It was then borne towards the house, whilst the keening commenced in a loud and wailing cry, accompanied with clapping of hands and every other symptom of external sorrow. But, independent of their compliance with this ceremony as an old usage, there is little doubt that the appearance of anything connected with the man who certainly occasioned Kelly's death awoke a keener and more intense sorrow for his loss. The wailing was thus continued until the coffin was laid opposite Grimes's door ; nor did it cease then, but, on the contrary, was renewed with louder and more bitter lamentations.

As the multitudes stood compassionating the affliction of the widow and orphans, it was the most impressive and solemn spectacle that could be witnessed. The very house seemed to have a condemned look ; and, as a single wintry breeze waved a tuft of long grass that grew on a seat of turf at the side of the door, it brought the vanity of human enmity before my mind with melancholy force. When the keening ceased, Kelly's wife, with her children, knelt, their faces towards the house of their enemy, and invoked, in the strong language of excited passion, the justice of Heaven upon the head of the man who had left her a widow and her children fatherless. I was anxious to know if Grimes would appear to disclaim the intention of murder ; but I under-

stood that he was at market, for it happened to be market-day.

"Come out!" said the widow—"come out, and look at the sight that's here before you! Come and view your work! Lay but your hand upon the coffin, and the blood of him that you murdhered will spout, before God and these Christhen people, in your guilty face! But, oh! may the almighty God bring this home to you! May you never lave this life, John Grimes, till worse nor has overtaken me and mine falls upon you and yours! May our curse light upon you this day—the curse, I say, of the widow and the orphans—and that your bloody hand has made us—may it blast you! May you and all belonging to you wither off the 'arth! Night and day, sleeping and waking, like snow off the ditch, may you melt, until your name and your place will be disremimbered, except to be cursed by them that will hear of you and your hand of murdher! Amin, we pray God this day!—and the widow and orphans' prayer will not fall to the ground while your guilty head is above! Childher, did you all say it?"

At this moment a deep, terrific murmur, or rather ejaculation, corroborative of assent to this dreadful imprecation, pervaded the crowd in a fearful manner; their countenances darkened, their eyes gleamed, and their scowling visages stiffened into an expression of determined vengeance.

When these awful words were uttered, Grimes's wife and daughters approached the window in tears, sobbing at the same time loudly and bitterly.

"You're wrong," said the wife—"you re wrong, Widow Kelly, in saying that my husband murdhered him!—he did not murdher him; for when you and

yours were far from him, I heard John Grimes declare, before the God who is to judge him, that he had no thought or intention of taking his life—he struck him in anger, and the blow did him an injury that was not intended. Don't curse him, Honor Kelly," said she—"don't curse him so fearfully; but, above all, don't curse me and my innocent childher, for *we* never harmed you nor wished you ill! *But it was this party work did it!* Oh, my God!" she exclaimed, wringing her hands in utter bitterness of spirit, "when will it be ended between friends and neighbours, that ought to live in love and kindness together, instead of fighting in this bloodthirsty manner!"

She then wept more violently, as did her daughters.

"May God give me mercy in the last day, Mrs. Kelly, as I pity, from my heart and soul, you and your orphans," she continued; "but don't curse us, for the love of God—for you know we should forgive our enemies, as we ourselves, that are the enemies of God, hope to be forgiven."

"May God forgive me, then, if I have wronged you or your husband," said the widow, softened by their distress; "but you know that, whether he intended his life or not, the stroke he gave him has left my childher without a father, and myself dissolate. Oh, heavens above me!" she exclaimed, in a scream of distraction and despair, "is it possible—is it thrue?—that my manly husband, the best father that ever breathed the breath of life, my own Denis, is lying dead?—murdhered before my eyes! Put your hands on my head some of you—put your hands on my head, or it will go to pieces. Where are you, Denis—where are you, the strong of hand and the tender of heart? Come to me, darling;

I want you in my distress. I want comfort, Denis; and I'll take it from none but yourself, for kind was your word to me in all my afflictions!"

All present were affected; and, indeed, it was difficult to say whether Kelly's wife or Grimes's was more to be pitied at the moment. The affliction of the latter and of her daughters was really pitiable: their sobs were loud, and the tears streamed down their cheeks like rain. When the widow's exclamations had ceased, or rather were lost in the loud cry of sorrow which was uttered by the keeners and friends of the deceased, they, too, standing somewhat apart from the rest, joined in it bitterly; and the solitary wail of Mrs. Grimes, differing in character from that of those who had been trained to modulate the most profound grief into strains of a melancholy nature, was particularly wild and impressive. At all events, her Christian demeanour, joined to the sincerity of her grief, appeased the enmity of many; so true is it that a soft answer turneth away wrath.. I could perceive, however, that the resentment of Kelly's male relations did not at all appear to be in any degree moderated.

The funeral again proceeded, and I remarked that, whenever a strange passenger happened to meet it he always turned back and accompanied it for a short distance, after which he resumed his journey, it being considered unlucky to omit this usage on meeting a funeral. Denis's residence was not more than two miles from the churchyard, which was situated in the town where he had received the fatal blow. As soon as we had got on about the half of this way, the priest of the parish met us, and the funeral, after proceeding a few perches more, turned into a green field, in the

corner of which stood a table with the apparatus for saying Mass spread upon it.

The coffin was then laid down once more, immediately before this temporary altar ; and the priest, after having robed himself, the wrong side of the vestments out, as is usual in the case of death, began to celebrate Mass for the dead, the congregation all kneeling. When this was finished the friends of the deceased approached the altar, and, after some private conversation, the priest turned round and inquired aloud—

" Who will give offerings ? "

The people were acquainted with the manner in which this matter is conducted, and, accordingly, knew what to do. When the priest put the question, Denis's brother, who was a wealthy man, came forward, and laid down two guineas on the altar ; the priest took this up, and, putting it on a plate, set out among the multitude, accompanied by two or three of those who were best acquainted with the inhabitants of the parish. He thus continued putting the question distinctly after each man had paid ; and, according as the money was laid down, those who accompanied the priest pronounced the name of the person who gave it, so that all present might hear it. This is also done to enable the friends of the deceased to know not only those who show them this mark of respect, but those who neglect it, in order that they may treat them in the same manner on similar occasions. The amount of money so received is very great ; for there is a kind of emulation among the people as to who will act with most decency and spirit, that is exceedingly beneficial to the priest. In such instances the difference of religion is judiciously overlooked ; for, although the prayers of Protestants are declined

on those occasions, yet it seems the same objection does not hold good against their money, and, accordingly, they pay as well as the rest. When the priest came round to where I stood, he shook hands with my brother, with whom he appeared to be on very friendly and familiar terms; he and I were then introduced to each other.

"Come," said he, with a very droll expression of countenance, shaking the plate at the same time up near my brother's nose—"come, Mr. D'Arcy, down with your offerings, if you wish to have a friend with St. Peter when you go as far as the gates; down with your money, sir, and you shall be remembered, depend upon it."

"Ah!" said my brother, pulling out a guinea, "I would with the greatest pleasure; but I fear this is not orthodox. I'm afraid it has the heretical mark upon it."

"In that case," replied his reverence, laughing heartily, "your only plan is to return it to the bosom of the Church by laying it on the plate here—it will then be within the pale, you know."

This reply produced a good deal of good-humour among that part of the crowd which immediately surrounded them—not excepting his nearest relations, who laughed heartily.

"Well," said my brother, as he laid it on the plate, "how many prayers will you offer up in my favour for this?"

"Leave that to myself," said his reverence, looking at the money—"it will be before you when you go to St. Peter."

He then held the plate out to me in a droll manner ; and I added another guinea to my brother's gift, for which I had the satisfaction of having my name called out so loud that it might be heard a quarter of a mile off.

" God bless you, sir," said the priest, " and I thank you."

" John," said I, when he left us, " I think that is a pleasant and rather a sensible man."

" He's as jovial a soul," replied my brother, " as ever gave birth to a jest, and he sings a right good song. Many a convivial hour have he and I spent together ; but as to being a Catholic in their sense—Lord help you ! At all events, he is no bigot ; but, on the contrary, a liberal and, putting religion out of the question, a kind and benevolent man."

When the offerings were all collected he returned to the altar, repeated a few additional prayers in prime style, as rapid as lightning ; and, after hastily shaking the holy water on the crowd, the funeral moved on. It was now two o'clock, the day clear and frosty, and the sun unusually bright for the season. During Mass many were added to those who formed the funeral train at the outset ; so that when we got out upon the road the procession appeared very large. After this few or none joined it ; for it is esteemed by no means " dacent " to do so after Mass, because, in that case, the matter is ascribed to an evasion of the offerings ; but those whose delay has not really been occasioned by this motive make it a point to pay them at the graveyard or after the interment, and sometimes even on the following day—so jealous are the peasantry of having any degrading suspicion attached to their generosity.

The order of the funeral now was as follows : foremost

the women ; next to them the corpse, surrounded by the relations ; the eldest son, in deep affliction, " led the coffin," as chief mourner, holding in his hand the corner of a sheet or piece of linen, fastened to the mort-cloth ; after the coffin came those who were on foot, and in the rear were the equestrians. When we were a quarter of a mile from the churchyard the funeral was met by a dozen of singing boys, belonging to a chapel choir which the priest, who was fond of music, had some time before formed. They fell in, two by two, immediately behind the corpse, and commenced singing the " Requiem," or Latin hymn for the dead.

The scene through which we passed at this time, though not clothed with the verdure and luxuriant beauty of summer, was, nevertheless, marked by that solemn and decaying splendour which characterises a fine country, lit up by the melancholy light of a winter setting sun. It was, therefore, much more in character with the occasion. Indeed, I felt it altogether beautiful ; and, as the " dying day-hymn stole aloft," the dim sunbeams fell, through a vista of naked, motionless trees, upon the coffin, which was borne with a slower and more funereal pace than before, in a manner that threw a solemn and visionary light upon the whole procession. This, however, was raised to something dreadfully impressive when the long train, thus proceeding with a motion so mournful, was seen each covered with a profusion of crimson ribbons, to indicate that the corpse they bore owed his death to a deed of murder. The circumstance of the sun glancing his rays upon the coffin was not unobserved by the peasantry, who considered it as a good omen to the spirit of the departed.

As we went up the street which had been the scene of the quarrel that proved so fatal to Kelly, the coffin was again laid down on the spot where he received his death-blow ; and, as was usual, the wild and melancholy *keena* was raised. My brother saw many of Grimes's friends among the spectators, but he himself was not visible. Whether Kelly's party saw them or not, we could not say ; if they did, they seemed not to notice them, for no expression of revenge or indignation escaped them.

At length we entered the last receptacle of the dead. The coffin was now placed upon the shoulders of the son and brothers of the deceased, and borne round the churchyard ; whilst the priest, with his stole upon him, preceded it, reading prayers for the eternal repose of the soul. Being then laid beside the grave, a *De profundis* was repeated by the priest and the Mass-server ; after which a portion of fresh clay, carried from the fields, was brought to his reverence, who read a prayer over it and consecrated it. This is a ceremony which is never omitted at the interment of a Roman Catholic. When it was over, the coffin was lowered into the grave, and the blessed clay shaken over it. The priest now took the shovel in his own hands, and threw in the three first shovelfuls—one in the name of the Father, one in the name of the Son, and one in the name of the Holy Ghost. The sexton then took it, and, in a short time, Denis Kelly was fixed for ever in his narrow bed.

While these ceremonies were going forward, the churchyard presented a characteristic picture. Beside the usual groups who straggle through the place to amuse themselves by reading the inscriptions on the tombs, you might see many individuals kneeling on particular

graves, where some relation lay, for the benefit of whose soul they offered up their prayers with an attachment and devotion which one cannot but admire. Sometimes all the surviving members of the family would assemble, and repeat a " Rosary " for the same purpose. Again, you might see an unhappy woman beside a newly-made grave, giving way to lamentation and sorrow for the loss of a husband, or of some beloved child. Here you might observe the " last bed " ornamented with hoops, decked in white paper, emblematic of the virgin innocence of the individual who slept below ; there a little board cross, informing you that " this monument was erected by a disconsolate husband to the memory of his beloved wife." But that which excited greatest curiosity was a sycamore tree which grew in the middle of the burying ground.

It is necessary to inform the reader that in Ireland many of the churchyards are exclusively appropriated to the interment of Roman Catholics, and, consequently, no Protestant corpse would be permitted to pollute or desecrate them. This was one of them ; but it appears that, by some means or other, the body of a Protestant had been interred in it—and hear the consequence ! The next morning Heaven marked its disapprobation of this awful visitation by a miracle ; for ere the sun rose from the east a full-grown sycamore had shot up out of the heretical grave, and stands there to this day, a monument at once of the profanation and its consequence. Crowds were looking at this tree, feeling a kind of awe, mingled with wonder, at the deed which drew down such a visible and lasting mark of God's displeasure. On the tombstones near Kelly's grave, men and women were seated, smoking tobacco to their very hearts' content ;

for, with that profusion which characterises the Irish in everything, they had brought out large quantities of tobacco, whisky, and bunches of pipes. On such occasions it is the custom for those who attend the wake or the funeral to bring a full pipe home with them ; and it is expected that as often as it is used they will remember to say, " God be merciful to the soul of him that this pipe was over."

The crowd, however, now began to disperse ; and the immediate friends of the deceased sent the priest, accompanied by Kelly's brother, to request that we would come in, as the last mark of respect to poor Denis's memory, and take a glass of wine and a cake.

" Come, Toby," said my brother, " we may as well go in, as it will gratify them ; we need not make much delay, and we will still be at home in sufficient time for dinner."

" Certainly you will," said the priest, " for you shall both come and dine with me to-day."

" With all my heart," said my brother—" I have no objection, for I know you give it good."

When we went in, the punch was already reeking from immense white jugs, that couldn't hold less than a gallon each.

" Now," said his reverence, very properly, " you have had a decent and creditable funeral, and have managed everything with great propriety ; let me request, therefore, that you will not get drunk, nor permit yourselves to enter into any disputes or quarrels, but be moderate in what you take, and go home peaceably."

" Why, thin, your reverence," replied the widow, " he's now in his grave, and, thank God, it's he that had the dacent funeral all out—ten good gallons did we put on

you, *asthore*, and it's yourself that liked the dacent thing, anyhow ; but sure, sir, it would shame him where he's lyin' if we disregarded him so far as to go home widout bringing in our friends that didn't desart us in our throuble, and thratin' them for their kindness."

While Kelly's brother was filling out all their glasses, the priest, my brother, and I were taking a little refreshment. When the glasses were filled, the deceased's brother raised his in his hand, and said—

" Well, gintlemen," addressing us, " I hope you'll pardon me for not dhrinking your healths first ; but people, you know, can't break through an ould custom, at any rate—so I give poor Denis's health, that's in his warm grave, and God be marciful to his sowl."

The priest now winked at me to give them their own way ; so we filled our glasses, and joined with the rest in drinking " Poor Denis's health, that's now in his warm grave, and God be merciful to his soul."

When this was finished, they then drank ours, and thanked us for our kindness in attending the funeral. It was now past five o'clock, and we left them just setting in to a hard bout of drinking, and rode down to his reverence's residence.

" I saw you smile," said he, on our way, " at the blundering toast of Mat Kelly ; but it would be labour in vain to attempt setting them right. What do they know about the distinctions of more refined life ? Besides, I maintain that what they said was as well calculated to express their affection as if they had drunk honest Denis's memory. It is, at least, unsophisticated. But did you hear," said he, " of the apparition that was seen last night on the mountain road above Denis's ? "

" I did not hear of it," I replied, equivocating a little.

" Why," said he, " it is currently reported that the spirit of a murdered pedlar, which haunts the hollow of the road at Drumfurrar, chased away the two servant-men as they were bringing home the coffin, and that, finding it a good fit, he then got into it, and walked half a mile along the road with the wooden surtout upon him ; and, finally, that, to wind up the frolic, he left it on one end half-way between the bridge and Denis's house, after putting a crowd of the countrymen to flight. I suspect some droll knave has played them a trick. I assure you that a deputation of them, who declared that they saw the coffin move along of itself, waited upon me this morning to know whether they ought to have him put into the coffin or gotten another."

" Well," said my brother, in reply to him, " after dinner we will probably throw some light upon that circumstance ; for I believe my brother here knows something about it."

" So, sir," said the priest, " I perceive you have been amusing yourself at their expense."

I seldom spent a pleasanter evening than I did with Father Molloy (so he was called), who was, as my brother said, a shrewd, sensible man, possessed of convivial powers of the first order. He sang us several good songs ; and, to do him justice, he had an excellent voice. He regretted very much the state of party and religious feeling, which he did everything in his power to suppress.

" But," said he, " I have little co-operation in my efforts to communicate knowledge to my flock and implant better feelings among them. You must know," he added, " that I am no great favourite among them. On being appointed to this parish by my bishop, I found

that the young man who was curate to my predecessor had formed a party against me, thinking, by that means, eventually to get the parish himself. Accordingly, on coming here, I found the chapel doors closed on me; so that a single individual among them would not recognise me as their proper pastor. By firmness and spirit however, I at length succeeded, after a long struggle against the influence of the curate, in gaining admission to the altar; and, by a proper representation of his conduct to the bishop I soon made my gentleman knock under. Although beginning to gain ground in the good opinion of the people, I am by no means yet a favourite. The curate and I scarcely speak; and a great number of my parishioners brand me with the epithet of the "Orange priest," and this principally because I occasionally associate with Protestants—a habit, gentlemen, which they will find some difficulty in making me give up as long as I can have the pleasure," said he, bowing, "of seeing such guests at my table as those with whose company I am now honoured."

It was now near nine o'clock, and my brother was beginning to relate an anecdote concerning the clergyman who had preceded Father Molloy in the parish, when a messenger from Mr. Wilson, already alluded to, came up in breathless haste, requesting the priest for God's sake to go down into town instantly, as the Kellys and the Grimeses were engaged in a fresh quarrel.

"My God!" he exclaimed—"when will this work have an end? But, to tell you the truth, gentlemen, I apprehended it; and I fear something still more fatal to the parties will yet be the consequence. Mr. D'Arcy, you must try what you can do with the Grimeses, and I will manage the Kellys."

We then proceeded to the town, which was but a very short distance from the priest's house ; and, on arriving, found a large crowd before the door of the house in which the Kellys had been drinking, engaged in hard conflict. The priest was on foot, and had brought his whip with him, it being an argument in the hands of a Roman Catholic pastor which tells so home that it is not to be gainsaid. Mr. Molloy and my brother now dashed in amongst them, and by remonstrance, abuse, blows, and entreaty, they with difficulty succeeded in terminating the fight. They were also assisted by Mr. Wilson and other persons, who dared not, until their appearance, run the risk of interfering between them. Wilson's servant, who had come for the priest, was still standing beside me looking on ; and, while my brother and Mr. Molloy were separating the parties, I asked him how the fray commenced.

"Why, sir," said he, "it bein' market-day, the Grimeses chanced to be in town, and this got to the ears of the Kellys, who were drinking in Cassidy's here till they got tipsy ; some then broke out, and began to go up and down the street, shouting for the face of a murdhering Grimes. The Grimeses, sir, happened, at the time, to be drinking with a parcel of their friends in Joe Sherlock's, and, hearing the Kellys calling out for them, why, as the dhrop, sir, was in on both sides, they were soon at it. Grimes has given one of the Kellys a great bating ; but Tom M'Guigan, Kelly's cousin, a little before we came, I'm tould, has knocked the seven senses out of him with the pelt of a brickbat in the stomach."

Soon after this, however, the quarrel was got under ; and, in order to prevent any more bloodshed that night, my brother and I got the Kellys together, and brought

them as far as our residence on their way home. As we went along they uttered awful vows and determinations of the deepest revenge, swearing repeatedly that they would shoot Grimes from behind a ditch if they could not in any other manner have his blood. They seemed highly intoxicated, and several of them were cut and abused in a dreadful manner; even the women were in such a state of excitement and alarm that grief for the deceased was in many instances forgotten. Several of both sexes were singing; some laughing with triumph at the punishment they had inflicted on the enemy; others of them, softened by what they had drunk, were weeping in tones of sorrow that might be heard a couple of miles off. Among the latter were many of the men, some of whom, as they staggered along, with their frieze big-coats hanging off one shoulder, clapped their hands and roared like bulls, as if they intended, by the loudness of their grief then, to compensate for their silence when sober. It was also quite ludicrous to see the men kissing each other, sometimes in their maudlin sorrow, and at others when exalted into the very madness of mirth. Such as had been cut in the scuffle, on finding the blood trickle down their faces, would wipe it off, then look at it, and break out into a parenthetical volley of curses against the Grimeses; after which they would resume their grief, hug each other in mutual sorrow, and clap their hands as before. In short, such a group could be seen nowhere but in Ireland.

When my brother and I had separated from them I asked him what had become of Vengeance, and if he were still in the country.

"No," said he; "with all his courage and watchfulness, he found that his life was not safe; he accordingly

sold off his property, and, collecting all his ready cash, emigrated to America, where, I hear, he is doing well."

"God knows," I replied, "I shouldn't be surprised if one-half of the population were to follow his example, for the state of society here among the lower orders is truly deplorable."

"Ay, but you are to consider," said he, "that you have been looking at the worst of it. If you pass an unfavourable opinion upon our countrymen when in the public-house or the quarrel, you ought to remember what they are under their own roofs and in all the relations of public life."

FROM

THE MIDNIGHT MASS.

* * * * * * * *

THE parish in which the scene of this story is laid was large, consequently the attendance of the people was proportionately great. On Christmas Day a Roman Catholic priest has, or is said to have, the privilege of saying three Masses, though on every other day in the year he can celebrate but two. Each priest, then, said one at midnight and two on the following day.

Accordingly, about twenty or thirty years ago the performance of the Midnight Mass was looked upon as an ordinance highly important and interesting. The preparations for it were general and fervent; so much so that not a Roman Catholic family slept till they heard it. It is true it only occurred once a year; but, had any person who saw it once been called upon to describe it, he would say that religion could scarcely present a scene so wild and striking.

The night in question was very dark, for the moon had long disappeared, and, as the inhabitants of the whole parish were to meet in one spot, it may be supposed that the difficulty was very great of traversing, in the darkness of midnight, the space between their respective residences and the place appointed by the priest for the celebration of Mass. This difficulty they contrived to surmount. From about eleven at night till twelve or one o'clock the parish presented a scene singularly picturesque, and, to

a person unacquainted with its causes, altogether mysterious. Over the surface of the surrounding country were scattered myriads of blazing torches, all converging to one point; whilst at a distance, in the central part of the parish, which lay in a valley, might be seen a broad focus of red light, quite stationary, with which one or more of the torches that moved across the fields mingled every moment. These torches were of bog-fir, dried and split for the occasion. All persons were accordingly furnished with them, and, by their blaze, contrived to make way across the country with comparative ease. This Mass, having been especially associated with festivity and enjoyment, was always attended by such excessive numbers that the ceremony was in most parishes celebrated in the open air, if the weather were at all favourable. Altogether, as we have said, the appearance of the country at this dead hour of the night was wild and impressive. Being Christmas, every heart was up, and every pocket replenished with money, if it could at all be procured. This general elevation of spirits was nowhere more remarkable than in contemplating the thousands of both sexes, old and young, each furnished, as before said, with a blazing flambeau of bog-fir, all streaming down the mountain-sides, along the roads, or across the fields, and settling at last into one broad sheet of fire. Many a loud laugh might then be heard ringing the night echo into reverberation; mirthful was the gabble in hard, guttural Irish; and now and then a song from someone whose potations had been rather copious would rise on the night breeze, to which a chorus was subjoined by a dozen voices from the neighbouring groups.

On passing the *sheebeen* and public-houses, the din of

mingled voices that issued from them was highly amusing, made up, as it was, of songs, loud talk, rioting, and laughter, with an occasional sound of weeping from some one who had become penitent in his drink. In the larger public-houses (for in Ireland there usually are one or two of these in the immediate vicinity of each chapel) family parties were assembled, who set in to carouse both before and after Mass. Those, however, who had any love affairs on hand generally selected the shebeen house, as being private and less calculated to expose them to general observation. As a matter of course, these jovial orgies frequently produced such disastrous consequences both to human life and female reputation, that the intrigues between the sexes, the quarrels, and violent deaths resulting from them ultimately occasioned the discontinuance of a ceremony which was only productive of evil. To this day it is an opinion among the peasantry in many parts of Ireland that there is something unfortunate connected with all drinking bouts held upon Christmas Eve. Such a prejudice naturally arises from a recollection of the calamities which so frequently befel many individuals while Midnight Masses were in the habit of being celebrated.

None of Frank M'Kenna's family attended Mass but himself and his wife. His children, having been bound by all the rules of courtesy to do the honours of the dance, could not absent themselves from it; nor, indeed, were they disposed to do so. Frank, however, and his "good woman" carried their torches, and joined the crowds which flocked to this scene of fun and devotion.

When they had arrived at the cross-roads beside which the chapel was situated, the first object that presented itself so prominently as to attract observation was Darby

More, dressed out in all his paraphernalia of blanket and horn, in addition to which he held in his hand an immense torch, formed into the figure of a cross. He was seated upon a stone, surrounded by a ring of old men and women, to whom he sang and sold a variety of Christmas carols, many of them rare curiosities in their way, inasmuch as they were his own composition. A little beyond them stood Mike Reillaghan and Peggy Gartland, towards both of whom he cast from time to time a glance of latent humour and triumph. He did not simply confine himself to singing his carols, but, during the pauses of the melody, addressed the wondering and attentive crowd as follows :—

" Good Christians—this is the day—how-and-iver, it's night now, glory be to God—that the angel Lucifer appeared to Shud'orth,* Meeshach, an' To-bed-we-go, in the village of Constantinople, near Jerooslem. The heavens be praised for it, 'twas a blessed an' holy night, an' remains so from that day to this—Oxis Doxis Glorioxis, Amin ! Well, the sarra one of him but appeared to thim at the hour o' midnight ; but they were asleep at the time, you see, and didn't persave him ; so wid that he pulled out a horn like mine—an', by the same token, it's lucky to wear horns about one from that day to this—an' he put it to his lips an' tuck a good, dacent —I mane, gave a good, dacent blast that soon roused them. ' Are yees asleep ? ' says he, ' when they awoke. ' Why, then, bud-an-age ! ' says he, ' isn't it a burning shame for able stout fellows like yees to be asleep at the hour o' midnight of all hours o' the night. Tare-an-age ! ' says he, ' get up wid yees, you dirty *spalpeens !* There's St. Pathrick in Jerooslem beyant ; the Pope's signin'

* *Siud ort :* a salutation or toast,

his mittimus to Ireland, to bless it in regard that neither corn, nor barley, nor phaties will grow an the land in consequence of a set of varmint that ates it up; an' there's not a glass o' whisky to be had in Ireland for love or money,' says Lucifer. 'Get up wid yees,' says he, 'an' go in an' get his blessin'; sure, there's not a Catholic in the counthry, barrin' Swaddlers,* but's in the town by this,' says he; 'ay, an' many o' the Protestants themselves, and the "black-mouths"† an' "blue-bellies" are gone in to get a share of it. An' now,' says he, 'bekase you wor so heavy-headed, I ordher it from this out, that the present night is to be obsarved in the Catholic Church all over the world, an' must be kep' holy; an' no thrue Catholic ever will miss from this pariod an opportunity of bein' awake at midnight,' says he, 'glory be to God!' An' now, good Christians, you have an account o' the blessed carol I was singin' for yees. They're but hapuns apiece; an' anybody that has the grace to keep one o' these about them will never meet wid sudden deaths or accidents, sich as hangin', or drownin', or bein' taken suddenly wid a configuration inwardly. I wanst knew a holy man that had a dhrame —about a friend of his it was—will any of yees take one? Thank you, *a colleen*—my blessin', the blessin' o' the pilgrim be an you! God bless you, Mike Reillaghan; an' I'm proud that he put it into your heart to buy one, for the rasons you know. An' now that Father Hoolaghan's comin', any of yees that 'ill want them 'ill find me here agin when Mass is over—Oxis Doxis Glorioxis, Amin!"

The priest at this time made his appearance, and those who had been assembled on the cross-roads joined the

* Perverts from Catholicity. † Presbyterians.

crowd at the chapel. No sooner was it bruited among them that their pastor had arrived, than the noise, gabble, singing, and laughing were immediately hushed; the shebeen and public houses were left untenanted; and all flocked to the chapel green, where Mass was to be said, as the crowd was too large to be contained within the small chapel.

Mike Reillaghan and Peggy Gartland were among the last who sought the "green"; as lovers they probably preferred walking apart, to the inconvenience of being jostled by the multitude. As they sauntered on slowly after the rest, Mike felt himself touched on the shoulder, and on turning round found Darby More beside him.

"It's painful to my feelins," observed the mendicant, "to have to say this blessed night that your father's son should act so shabby an' ondacent."

"Saints above! how, Darby?"

"Why, don't you know that only for me—for what I heard, an' what I tould you—you'd not have the purty girl here at your elbow? Wasn't it, as I said, his intintion to come an' whip up the *colleen* to Kilnaheery while the family ud be at Mass? Sure, only for this, I say, you *bosthoon*, an' that I made you bring her to Mass, where ud the purty *colleen* be?—why, half-way to Kilnaheery, an' the girl disgraced for ever!"

"Thrue for you, Darby, I grant it; but what do you want me to do?"

"Oh, for that matther, nothin' at all, Mike; only I suppose that when your tailor made the clothes an you he put no pockets to them?"

"Oh, I see where you are, Darby! Well, here's a crown for you; an' when Peggy an' I's made man an' wife you'll get another."

"Mike, *achora*, I see you are your father's son still. Now listen to me. First, you needn't fear sudden death while you keep that blessed carol about you. Next, get your friends together goin' home, for Frank might jist take the liberty, wid about a score of his 'boys,' to lift her from you even thin. Do the thing I say—don't thrust him; an', moreover, watch in her father's house to-night wid your friends. Thirdly, make it up wid Frank; there's an oath upon you both, you persave. Make it up wid him, if he axes you: don't have a broken oath upon you; for, if you refuse, he'll get you put out o' connection,* and that ud plase him to the backbone."

Mike felt the truth and shrewdness of this advice, and determined to follow it. Both young men had been members of an illegal society, and, in yielding to their passions so far as to assault each other, had been guilty of bad faith. The following Christmas Day had been appointed by their parish delegates to take the quarrel into consideration; and the best means of escaping censure was certainly to express regret for what had occurred, and to terminate the hostility by an amicable adjustment of their disputes.

They had now reached the chapel green, where the scene that presented itself was so striking and strange that we will give the reader an imperfect sketch of its appearance. He who stood at midnight upon a little mount which rose behind the chapel might see between five and six thousand torches, all blazing together, and forming a level mass of red, dusky light, burning against the dark horizon. These torches were so close to each other that their light seemed to blend, as if they

* Expel him.

had constituted one wide surface of flame ; and nothing could be more preternatural-looking than the strikingly devotional countenances of those who were assembled at their midnight worship, when observed beneath this canopy of fire. The Mass was performed under the open sky, upon a table covered with the sacrificial linen and other apparatus for the ceremony. The priest stood, robed in white, with two large torches on each side of his book, reciting the prayers in a low, rapid voice, his hands raised, whilst the congregation were hushed and bent forward in the reverential silence of devotion, their faces touched by the strong blaze of the torches into an expression of deep solemnity. The scenery about the place was wild and striking ; and the stars, scattered thinly over the heavens, twinkled with a faint religious light that blended well with the solemnity of this extraordinary worship, and rendered the rugged nature of the abrupt cliffs and precipices, together with the still outline of the stern mountains, sufficiently visible to add to the wildness and singularity of the ceremony. In fact, there was an unearthly character about it ; and the spectre-like appearance of the white-robed priest, as he

" Muttered his prayer to the midnight air,"

would almost impress a man with the belief that it was a meeting of the dead, and that the priest was repeating, like the Grey Friar, his

" Mass of the days that were gone."

On the ceremony being concluded, the scene, however was instantly changed : the lights were waved, and scattered promiscuously among each other, giving an idea of confusion and hurry that was strongly contrasted with the death-like stillness that prevailed a few minutes

before. The gabble and laugh were again heard loud and hearty, and the public and shebeen houses once more became crowded. Many of the young people made, on these occasions, what is called "a run-away"; and other peccadilloes took place, for which the delinquents were either "read out from the altar," or sent probably to St. Patrick's Purgatory at Lough Derg to do penance. Those who did not choose to stop in the whisky houses now hurried home with all speed, to take some sleep before early Mass, which was to be performed the next morning about daybreak. The same number of lights might therefore be seen streaming in different ways over the parish; the married men holding the torches, and leading their wives; bachelors escorting their sweethearts, and not unfrequently extinguishing their flambeaux, that the dependence of the females upon their care and protection might more lovingly call forth their gallantry.

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FROM

THE HEDGE SCHOOL.

THE ABDUCTION OF MAT KAVANAGH.

* * * * * * * *

It was one Saturday night in the latter end of the month of May that a dozen Findramore "boys," as they were called, set out upon this most singular of all literary speculations, resolved, at whatever risk, to secure the person and effect the permanent bodily presence among them of the redoubtable Mat Kavanagh. Each man was mounted on a horse, and one of them brought a spare steed for the accommodation of the schoolmaster. The caparison of this horse was somewhat remarkable. It consisted of a wooden straddle, such as is used by the peasantry for carrying wicker panniers or *creels*, which are hung upon two wooden pins that stand up out of its sides. Under it was a straw mat, to prevent the horse's back from being stripped by the straddle. On one side of this hung a large *creel*, and on the other a strong sack, tied round a stone of sufficient weight to balance the empty *creel*. The night was warm and clear; the moon and stars all threw their mellow light from a serene, unclouded sky; and the repose of nature in the short nights of this delightful season resembles that of a young virgin of sixteen—still, light and glowing. Their way, for the most part of their journey, lay through a solitary mountain road; and, as they did not undertake the

enterprise without a good stock of *poteen*, their light-hearted songs and choruses awoke the echoes that slept in the mountain glens as they went along. The adventure, it is true, had as much of frolic as of seriousness in it; and, merely as the means of a day's fun for the boys, it was the more eagerly entered into.

It was about midnight when they left home, and, as they did not wish to arrive at the village to which they were bound until the morning should be rather advanced, the journey was as slowly performed as possible. Every remarkable object on the way was noticed, and its history, if any particular association was connected with it, minutely detailed whenever it happened to be known. When the sun rose, many beautiful green spots and hawthorn valleys excited, even from these unpolished and illiterate peasants, warm bursts of admiration at their fragrance and beauty. In some places the dark, flowery heath clothed the mountains to the tops, from which the grey mists, lit by a flood of light, and breaking into masses before the morning breeze, began to descend into the valleys beneath them; whilst the voice of the grouse, the bleating of sheep and lambs, the pee-weet of the wheeling lapwing, and the song of the lark threw life and animation over the previous stillness of the country. Sometimes a shallow river would cross the road, winding off into a valley that was overhung on one side by rugged precipices clothed with luxuriant heath and wild ash; whilst on the other it was skirted by a long sweep of greensward, skimmed by the twittering swallow, over which lay scattered numbers of sheep, cows, brood mares, and colts—many of them rising and stretching themselves ere they resumed their pasture, leaving the spots on which they lay of a deeper green.

Occasionally, too, a sly-looking fox might be seen lurking about a solitary lamb, or brushing over the hills with a fat goose upon his back, retreating to his den among the inaccessible rocks, after having plundered some unsuspecting farmer.

As they advanced into the skirts of the cultivated country, they met many other beautiful spots of scenery among the upland, considerable portions of which, particularly in long sloping valleys that faced the morning sun, were covered with hazel and brushwood ; where the unceasing and simple notes of the cuckoo were incessantly plied, mingled with the more mellow and varied notes of the thrush and blackbird. Sometimes the bright summer waterfall seemed in the rays of the sun like a column of light, and the springs that issued from the sides of the more distant and lofty mountains shone with a steady, dazzling brightness on which the eye could scarcely rest. The morning, indeed, was beautiful, the fields in bloom, and everything cheerful. As the sun rose in the heavens, nature began gradually to awaken into life and happiness ; nor was the natural grandeur of a Sabbath summer morning among these piles of magnificent mountains, nor its heartfelt but more artificial beauty in the cultivated country, lost even upon the unphilosophical " boys " of Findramore ; so true is it that the appearance of nature will force enjoyment upon the most uncultivated heart.

When they had arrived within two miles of the little town in which Mat Kavanagh was fixed, they turned off into a deep glen a little to the left ; and, after having seated themselves under a whitethorn which grew on the banks of a rivulet, they began to devise the best immediate measures to be taken.

"Boys," said Tim Dolan, "how will we manage now with this thief of a schoolmaster, at all? Come, Jack Traynor, you that's up to still-house work—escapin' and carryin' away stills from gaugers, the bloody villains!—out wid yer spake, till we hear your opinion."

"Do ye think, boys," said Andy Connell, "that we could flatther him to come by fair manes?"

"Flatther him! said Traynor; "and, by my sowl, if we flatther him at all, it must be by the hair of the head. No, no; let us bring him first whether he will or not, an' ax his consint aftherwards."

"I'll tell you what it is, boys," continued Connell—"I'll hould a wager, if you lave him to me, I'll bring him wid his own consint."

"No, nor sorra that you'll do, nor could do," replied Traynor; "for, along wid everything else, he thinks he's not jist doted on by the Findramore people, being one of the Ballyscanlan tribe. No, no; let two of us go to his place, and purtind that we have other business in the fair of Clansallagh on Monday next, and ax him in to dhrink, for he'll not refuse that, anyhow; then when he's half tipsy, ax him to convoy us this far; we'll then meet you here, an' tell him some palaver or other—sit down again where we are now, and, afther making him dead dhrunk, hoist a big stone in the creel, and Mat in the sack on the other side, wid his head out, and off wid him; and he will know neither act nor part about it till we're at Findramore."

Having approved of this project, they pulled out each a substantial complement of stout oaten bread, which served, along with the whisky, for breakfast. The two persons pitched on for decoying Mat were Dolan and Traynor, who accordingly set out, full of glee,

at the singularity and drollness of their undertaking. It is unnecessary to detail the ingenuity with which they went about it—because, in consequence of Kavanagh's love of drink, very little ingenuity was necessary. One circumstance, however, came to light which gave them much encouragement, and that was a discovery that Mat by no means relished his situation.

In the meantime, those who stayed behind in the glen felt their patience begin to flag a little, because of the delay made by the others, who had promised, if possible, to have the schoolmaster in the glen before two o'clock. But the fact was that Mat, who was far less deficient in hospitality than in learning, brought them into his house, and not only treated them to plenty of whisky, but made the wife prepare a dinner, for which he detained them, swearing that except they stopped to partake of it he would not convoy them to the place appointed. Evening was therefore tolerably far advanced when they made their appearance at the glen, in a very equivocal state of sobriety—Mat being by far the steadiest of the three, but still considerably the worse for what he had taken. He was now welcomed by a general huzza ; and, on his expressing his surprise at the appearances, they pointed to their horses, telling him that they were bound for the fair of Clansallagh, for the purpose of selling them. This was the more probable, as when a fair occurs in Ireland it is usual for cattle-dealers, particularly horse-jockeys, to effect sales and " show " their horses on the evening before.

Mat now sat down, and was vigorously plied with strong *poteen !* songs were sung, stories told, and every device resorted to that was calculated to draw out and heighten his sense of enjoyment ; nor were their efforts

without success, for, in the course of a short time, Mat was free from all earthly care, being incapable of either speaking or standing.

" Now, boys," said Dolan, " let us do the thing clane an' dacent. Let you, Jem Coogan, Brian Murphy, Paddy Delany, and Andy Connell, go back, and tell the wife and two childher a cock-and-a-bull story about Mat—say that he is coming to Findramore for good and all, and that'll be thruth, you know ; and that he ordhered yees to bring her and them afther him ; and we can come back for the furniture to-morrow."

A word was enough—they immediately set off ; and the others, not wishing that Mat's wife should witness the mode of his conveyance, proceeded home, for it was now dusk. The plan succeeded admirably ; and in a short time the wife and children, mounted behind the " boys " on the horses, were on the way after them to Findramore.

The reader is already aware of the plan they had adopted for translating Mat ; but, as it was extremely original, I will explain it somewhat more fully. The moment the schoolmaster was intoxicated to the necessary point—that is to say, totally helpless and insensible—they opened the sack and put him in, heels foremost, tying it in such a way about his neck as might prevent his head from getting into it, thus avoiding the danger of suffocation. The sack, with Mat at full length in it, was then fixed to the pin of the straddle, so that he was in an erect posture during the whole journey. A *creel* was then hung at the other side, in which was placed a large stone of sufficient weight to preserve an equilibrium ; and to prevent any accident, a droll fellow sat astride behind the straddle, amusing himself and the rest by breaking jokes upon the novelty of Mat's situation.

" Well, Mat, *ma bouchal*, how duv ye like your sitivation ? I believe, for all your larnin', the Findramore boys have sacked you at last ! "

" Ay," exclaimed another, " he is sacked at last, in spite of his Matthew-maticks."

" An', be my sowks," observed Traynor, " he'd be a long time goin' up a May-powl in the state he's in—his own snail would bate him."*

" Yes," said another ; " but he desarves credit for travellin' from Clansallagh to Findramore without layin' a foot to the ground—

" ' Wan day wid Captain Whisky I wrastled a fall,
But faith I was no match for the captain at all—
But faith I was no match for the captain at all,
Though the landlady's measures they were damnably small.
Tooral, looral, looral, looral, lido.'

Whoo—hurroo ! my darlings—success to the Findramore boys ! Hurroo—hurroo—the Findramore boys for ever ! "

" Boys, did ever yees hear the song Mat made on Ned Mullen's fight wid Jemmy Connor's gander ? Well, here it is, to the tune of ' Brian O'Lynn '—

' As Ned and the gander wor basting each other,
I hard a loud cry from the grey goose, his mother ;
I ran to assist him, wid my great speed,
But before I arrived the poor gander did bleed.

' Alas ! " says the gander, " I'm very ill-trated,
For treacherous Mullen has me fairly defated ;
Bud had you been here for to show me fair play,
I could leather his *puckan* around the lee bray.' "

" Bravo, Mat ! " addressing the insensible schoolmaster —" success, poet ! Hurroo for the Findramore boys ! the Bridge boys for ever ! "

* An allusion to a question in " Gough's Arithmetic."

They then commenced, in a tone of mock gravity, to lecture him upon his future duties—detailing the advantages of his situation, and the comforts he would enjoy among them ; although they might as well have addressed themselves to the stone on the other side. In this manner they got along, amusing themselves at Mat's expense, and highly elated at the success of their undertaking. About two o'clock in the morning they reached the top of the little hill above the village, when, on looking back along the level stretch of road, which I have already described, they noticed their companions, with Mat's wife and children, moving briskly after them. A general huzza now took place, which, in a few minutes, was answered by two or three dozen of the young folks, who were assembled in Barny Brady's, waiting for their arrival. The scene now became quite animated—cheer after cheer succeeded—jokes, laughter, and rustic wit, pointed by the spirit of Brady's *poteen*, flew briskly about. When Mat was unsacked, several of them came up, and, shaking him cordially by the hand, welcomed him among them. To the kindness of this reception, however, Mat was wholly insensible, having been for the greater part of the journey in a profound sleep. The boys next slipped the loop of the sack off the straddle pin ; and, carrying Mat into a farmer's house, they deposited him in a settle-bed, where he slept, unconscious of the journey he had performed, until breakfast-time the next morning. In the meantime the wife and children were taken care of by Mrs. Connell, who provided them with a bed and every other comfort which they could require. The next morning, when Mat awoke, his first call was for a drink. I should have here observed that Mrs. Kavanagh had been sent for by the good

woman in whose house Mat had slept, that they might all breakfast and have a drop together, for they had already succeeded in reconciling her to the change.

"Wather!" said Mat—"a drink of wather, if it's to be had for love or money, or I'll split wid druth—I'm all in a state of conflagration; and my head—by the sowl of Newton, the inventor of fluxions, but my head is a complete illucidation of the centrifugal motion, so it is. Tundher-an'-turf! is there no wather to be had? Nancy, I say, for God's sake, quicken yourself wid the hydraulics, or the best mathematician in Ireland's gone to the abode of Euclid and Pythagoras, that first invented the multiplication table."

On cooling his burning blood with the "hydraulics," he again lay down, with the intention of composing himself for another sleep; but his eye, having noticed the novelty of his situation, he once more called Nancy,

"Nancy, *avourneen*," he inquired, "will you be afther resolving me one single proposition—Where am I at the present spaking? Is it in the Siminary at home, Nancy?"

Nancy had been desired to answer in the affirmative, hoping that if his mind was made easy on that point he might refresh himself by another hour or two's sleep, as he appeared to be not at all free from the effects of his previous intoxication.

"Why, Mat, jewel, where else would you be, *alanna*, but at home? Sure, isn't here Jack, an' Biddy, an' myself, Mat, *agra*, along wid me. Your head isn't well, but all you want is a good rousin' sleep."

"Very well, Nancy—very well; that's enough—quite satisfacthory—*quod erat demonstrandum*. May all kinds of bad luck rest upon the Findramore boys,

anyway! The unlucky vagabonds—I'm the third they've done up. Nancy, off wid ye, like quicksilver, for the priest."

"The priest? Why, Mat, jewel, what puts that in your head? Sure, there's nothing wrong wid ye, only the sup o' drink you tuck yestherday."

"Go, woman," said Mat; "did you ever know me to make a false calculation? I tell you, I'm *non compos mentis* from head to heel. Head!—by my sowl, Nancy, it'll soon be a *caput mortuum* wid me—I'm far gone in a disease they call an ophtical delusion—the divil a thing less it is—me bein' in my own place, an' to think I'm lyin' in a settle-bed; that there is a large dresser, covered wid pewter dishes and plates; and, to crown all, the door on the wrong side of the house. Off wid ye, and tell his reverence that I want to be anointed, and to die in pace and charity wid all men. May the most especial kind of bad luck light down upon you, Findramore, and all that's in you, both man and baste—you have given me my gruel along wid the rest; but, thank God, you won't hang me, anyhow! Off, Nancy, for the priest, till I die like a Christian, in pace and forgiveness wid the world—All kinds of hard fortune to them! Make haste, woman, if you expect me to die like a Christian! If they had let me alone till I'd publish to the world my Treatise upon Conic Sections—but to be cut off on my march to fame. Another draught of the hydraulics, Nancy, an' then for the priest—but see, bring Father Connell, the curate, for he understands something about Matthew-maticks; an' never heed Father Roger, for little he knows about them, not even the difference between a right line—in the page of history, to his everlasting disgrace, be it recorded!"

"Mat," replied Nancy, scarcely preserving her gravity, "keep yourself from talkin', an' fall asleep, then you'll be well enough."

"Is there e'er a sup at all in the house?" said Mat—"if there is, let me get it; for, there's an ould proverb, though its a most unmathematical axiom as ever was invinted—'Try a hair of the same dog that bit you.' Give me a glass, Nancy, anyhow, an' you can go for Father Connell after. Oh, by the sowl of Isaac, that invinted fluxions, what's this for?"

A general burst of laughter followed this demand and ejaculation; and Mat sat up once more in the settle, and examined the place with keener scrutiny. Nancy herself laughed heartily, and, as she handed him the full glass, entered into an explanation of the circumstances attending his translation.

Mat, at all times rather of a pliant disposition, felt rejoiced on finding that he was still *compos mentis;* and, on hearing what took place, he could not help entering into the humour of the enterprise, at which he laughed as heartily as any of them.

"Mat," said the farmer and half a dozen of the neighbours, "you're a happy man; there's a hundred of the boys have a schoolhouse half built for you this same blessed sunshiny mornin', while you're lying at ase in your bed."

"By the sowl of Newton that invinted fluxions!" replied Mat, "but I'll take revenge for the disgrace you put upon my profession by stringing up a schoolmaster among you, and I'll hang you all! It's death to stale a four-footed animal; but what do you desarve for stalin' a Christian baste, a two-legged schoolmaster without feathers, eighteen miles, and he not to know it?"

In the course of a short time Mat was dressed, and, having found benefit from the "hair of the dog that bit him," he tried another glass, which strung his nerves, or, as he himself expressed it—"they've got the raal mathematical tinsion again." What the farmer said, however, about the schoolhouse had been true. Early that morning all the growing and grown young men of Findramore and its "vircinity" had assembled, selected a suitable spot, and, with merry hearts, were then busily engaged in erecting a schoolhouse for their general accommodation.

The manner of building hedge schoolhouses being rather curious, I will describe it. The usual spot selected for their erection is a ditch on the roadside, in some situation where there will be as little damp as possible. From such a spot an excavation is made equal to the size of the building, so that when this is scooped out, the back side-wall and the two gables are already formed, the banks being dug perpendicularly. The front side-wall, with a window in each side of the door, is then built of clay or green sods laid along in rows; the gables are also topped with sods, and perhaps a row or two laid upon the back side-wall if it should be considered too low. Having got the erection of Mat's house thus far, they procured a scraw-spade, and repaired with a couple of dozen of cars to the next bog, from which they cut the light heathy surface in strips the length of the roof. A scraw-spade is an instrument resembling the letter T, with an iron plate at the lower end, considerably bent, and well adapted to the purpose for which it is intended. Whilst one party cut the scraws, another bound the "couples" and "bauks," and a third cut as many green branches as were sufficient to wattle it. The couples,

being bound, were raised, the ribs laid on, then the wattles, and afterwards the scraws.

Whilst these successive processes went forward, many others had been engaged all the morning cutting rushes ; and the scraws were no sooner laid on than half a dozen thatchers mounted the roof, and, long before the evening was closed, a schoolhouse, capable of holding near a hundred children, was finished. But among the peasantry no new house is ever put up without a hearth-warming and a dance. Accordingly, the clay floor was paired—a fiddler procured—Barny Brady and his stock of *poteen* sent for ; the young women of the village and surrounding neighbourhood attended in their best finery ; dancing commenced ; and it was four o'clock the next morning when the merrymakers departed, leaving Mat a new home and a hard floor, ready for the reception of his scholars.

Business now commenced. At nine o'clock the next day Mat's furniture was settled in a small cabin, given to him at a cheap rate by one of the neighbouring farmers ; for, whilst the schoolhouse was being built, two men, with horses and cars, had gone to Clansallagh, accompanied by Nancy, and removed the furniture, such as it was, to their new residence. Nor was Mat, upon the whole, displeased at what had happened. He was now fixed in a flourishing country, fertile and well cultivated ; nay, the bright landscape which his schoolhouse commanded was sufficient in itself to reconcile him to his situation. The inhabitants were in comparatively good circumstances, many of them wealthy, respectable farmers, and capable of remunerating him very decently for his literary labours ; and, what was equally flattering, there was a certainty of his having

a numerous and well-attended school, in a neighbourhood with whose inhabitants he was acquainted.

Honest, kind-hearted Paddy!—pity that you should ever feel distress or hunger!—pity that you should be compelled to seek in another land the hard-earned pittance by which you keep the humble cabin over the head of your chaste wife and naked children! Alas! what noble materials for composing a national character, of which humanity might be justly proud, do the lower orders of the Irish possess if raised and cultivated by a Christian education! Pardon me, gentle readers, for this momentary ebullition—I grant I am a little dark now. I assure you, however, the tear of enthusiastic admiration is warm on my eyelids when I remember the flitches of bacon, the sacks of potatoes, the bags of meal, the *miscawns* of butter, and the dishes of eggs —not omitting crate after crate of turf—which came in such rapid succession to Mat Kavanagh during the first week in which he opened his school. Ay, and many a bottle of stout *poteen*, when

"The eye of the gauger saw it not,"

was, with a sly, good-humoured wink, handed over to Mat or Nancy, no matter which, from under the comfortable drab jock, with velvet-covered collar, erect about the honest, ruddy face of a warm, smiling farmer, or even the tattered frieze of a poor labourer, anxious to secure the attention of the "masther" to his little *shoneen*, whom, in the extravagance of his ambition, he destined to "wear the robes as a clargy." Let no man say, I repeat, that the Irish are not fond of education.

In the course of a month Mat's school was full to the door-posts; for, in fact, he had the parish to himself —many attending from a distance of three, four, and

five miles. His merits, however, were believed to be great, and his character for learning stood high, though unjustly so—for a more superficial, and, at the same time, a more presuming dunce never existed ; but his character alone could secure him a good attendance. He therefore belied the unfavourable prejudices against the Findramore folk which had gone abroad, and was a proof in his own person that the reason of the former schoolmasters' miscarriage lay in the belief of their incapacity which existed among the people. But Mat was one of those showy, shallow fellows who did not lack for assurance.

The first step a hedge schoolmaster took on establishing himself in a school was to write out, in his best copper-plate hand, a flaming advertisement, detailing at full length the several branches he professed himself capable of teaching. I have seen many of these—as, who that is acquainted with Ireland has not ?—and beyond all doubt, if the persons that issued them were acquainted with the various heads recapitulated, they must have been buried in the most profound obscurity, as no man but a walking encyclopædia—an Admirable Crichton—could claim an intimacy with them, embracing, as they often did, the whole circle of human knowledge. 'Tis true, the vanity of the pedagogue had full scope in these advertisements, as there was none to bring him to an account, except some rival, who could only attack him on those practical subjects which were known to both. Independently of this, there was a good-natured collusion between them on those points which were beyond their knowledge, inasmuch as they were not practical but speculative, and by no means involved their character or personal interests. On the next Sunday, therefore, after Mat's establishment at Findra-

more, you might see a circle of the peasantry assembled at the chapel door, perusing, with suitable reverence and admiration on their faces, the following advertisement; or, perhaps, Mat himself, with a learned, consequential air, in the act of explaining it to them :—

"*EDUCATION.*

"*Mr. Matthew Kavanagh, Philomath and Professor of the Learned Languages, begs leave to inform the Inhabitants of Findramore and its vircinity, that he Lectures on the following Branches of Education in his Seminary at the above-recited place :—*

"Spelling, Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic, upon altogether *new* principles, hitherto undiscovered by any excepting himself, and for which he expects a Patent from Trinity College, Dublin; or, at any rate, from Squire Johnston, Esq., who paternizes many of the pupils: Book-keeping, by single and double entry—Geometry, Trigonometry, Stereometry, Mensuration, Navigation, Gauging, Surveying, Dialling, Astronomy, Astrology, Austerity, Fluxions, Geography, ancient and modern—Maps, the Projection of the *Spear*—Algebra, the use of the Globes, Natural and Moral Philosophy, Pneumatics, Optics, Dioptics, Catroptics, Hydraulics, Ærostatics, Geology, Glorification, Divinity, Mythology, Midicinality, Physic, by theory only, Metaphysics practically, Chemistry, Electricity, Galvanism, Mechanics, Antiquities, Agriculture, Ventilation, Explosion, etc.

"In Classics—Grammar, Cordery, Æsop's Fables, Erasmus' Colloquies, Cornelius Nepos, Phœdrus, Valerius Maximus, Justin, Ovid, Sallust, Virgil, Horace, Juvenal, Persius, Terence, Tully's Offices, Cicero, Manouverius

Turgidus, Esculapius, Regerius, Satanus Nigrus, Quinctilian, Livy, Thomas Aquinas, Cornelius Agrippa, and Cholera Morbus.

" Greek Grammar, Greek Testament, Lucian, Homer, Sophocles, Eschylus, Thucydides, Aristophanes, Xenophon, Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, and the Works of Alexander the Great; the manners, habits, customs, usages, meditations of the Grecians; the Greek digamma resolved, Prosody, Composition, both in prose-verse and oratory, in English, Latin, and Greek; together with various other branches of learning and scholastic profundity—*quos enumerare longum est*—along with Irish Radically, and a small taste of Hebrew upon the Masoretic text.

" MATTHEW KAVANAGH, *Philomath*."

Having posted this document upon the chapel door, and in all the public places and cross-roads of the parish, Mat considered himself as having done his duty. He now began to teach, and his school continued to increase to his heart's content, every day bringing him fresh scholars. In this manner he flourished till the beginning of winter, when those boys who, by the poverty of their parents, had been compelled to go to service to the neighbouring farmers, flocked to him in numbers, quite voracious for knowledge. An addition was consequently built to the schoolhouse, which was considerably too small; so that, as Christmas approached, it would be difficult to find a more numerous or merry establishment under the roof of a hedge school. But it is time to give an account of its interior.

The reader will, then, be pleased to picture to himself such a house as I have already described—in a line with

the hedge ; the eave of the back roof within a foot of the ground behind it ; a large hole exactly in the middle of the " *riggin'*," as a chimney ; immediately under which is an excavation in the floor, burned away by a large fire of turf, loosely heaped together. This is surrounded by a circle of urchins, sitting on the bare earth, and exhibiting a series of speckled shins all radiating towards the fire, like sausages on a " Poloni " dish. There they are, wedged as close as they can sit—one with half a thigh off his breeches—another with half an arm off his tattered coat—a third without breeches at all, wearing as a substitute a piece of his mother's old petticoat, pinned about his loins—a fourth, no coat—a fifth with a cap on him, because he has got a scald, from having sat under the juice of fresh-hung bacon—a sixth with a black eye—a seventh with two rags about his heels to keep his kibes clean—an eighth crying to get home, because he has got a headache, though it may be as well to hint that there is a drag-hunt to start from beside his father's in the course of the day. In this ring, with his legs stretched in a most lordly manner, sits, upon a deal chair, Mat himself, with his hat on, basking in the enjoyment of unlimited authority. His dress consists of a black coat considerably in want of repair, transferred to his shoulders through the means of a clothes-broker in the county town—a white cravat, round a large stuffing, having that part which comes in contact with the chin somewhat streaked with brown—a black waistcoat with one or two " tooth-an'-egg " metal buttons sewed on where the original had fallen off—black corduroy inexpressibles, twice dyed, and sheep's-grey stockings. In his hand is a large broad ruler, the emblem of his power, the woful instrument of executive justice, and the signal

of terror to all within his jurisdiction. In a corner below is a pile of turf, where, on entering, every boy throws his two sods with a pitch from under his left arm. He then comes up to the master, catches his forelock with finger and thumb, and bobs down his head, by way of making him a bow, and goes to his seat. Along the walls on the ground is a series of round stones, some of them capped with a straw collar or hassock, on which the boys sit; others have bosses, and many of them hobs —a light but compact kind of boggy substance found in the mountains. On these several of them sit; the greater number of them, however, have no seats whatever, but squat themselves down, without compunction, on the hard floor. Hung about, on wooden pegs driven into the walls, are the shapeless yellow *caubeens* of such as can boast the luxury of a hat, or caps made of goat or hare skin, the latter having the ears of the animal rising ludicrously over the temples, or cocked out at the sides, and the scut either before or behind, according to the taste or the humour of the wearer. The floor, which is only swept every Saturday, is strewed over with tops of quills, pens, pieces of broken slate, and tattered leaves of "Reading made Easy," or fragments of old copies. In one corner is a knot engaged at "fox-and-geese," or the "walls of Troy," on their slates; in another, a pair of them are "fighting bottles," which consists in striking the bottoms together, and he whose bottle breaks first of course loses. Behind the master is a third set, playing "heads and points"—a game of pins. Seme are more industriously employed in writing their copies, which they perform seated on the ground, with their paper on a copy-board—a piece of planed deal the size of the copy, an appendage now nearly

exploded—their cheek-bones laid within half an inch of the left side of the copy, and the eye set to guide the motion of the hand across, and to regulate the straightness of the lines and the forms of the letters. Others, again, of the more grown boys are working their sums with becoming industry. In a dark corner are a pair of urchins thumping each other, their eyes steadily fixed on the master, lest he might happen to glance in that direction. Near the master himself are the larger boys, from twenty-two to fifteen—shaggy-headed slips, with loose-breasted shirts lying open about their bare chests; ragged colts, with white, dry, bristling beards upon them, that never knew a razor—strong stockings on their legs—heavy brogues, with broad, nail-paved soles, and breeches open at the knees. Nor is the establishment altogether without females; but these, in hedge schools, were too few in number to form a distinct class. They were, for the most part, the daughters of wealthy farmers, who considered it necessary to their respectability that they should not be altogether illiterate; such a circumstance being a considerable drawback, in the opinion of an admirer, from the character of a young woman for whom he was about to propose—a drawback, too, which was always weighty in proportion to her wealth or respectability.

Having given our readers an imperfect sketch of the interior of Mat's establishment, we will now proceed, however feebly, to represent him at work, with all the machinery of the system in full operation.

"Come, boys, rehearse—(buz, buz, buz)—I'll soon be after calling up the first spelling lesson—(buz, buz, buz)—then the mathematicians—book-keepers—Latinists and Grecians, successfully. (Buz, buz, buz.) Silence

there below!—your pens. Tim Casey, isn't this a purty hour o' the day for you to come into school at; *arrah*, and what kept you, Tim? Walk up wid yourself here, till we have a confabulation together; you see I love to be talking to you."

"Sir, Larry Branagan, here—he's throwing spits at me out of his pen," (Buz, buz, buz.)

"By my sowl, Larry, there's a rod in steep for you."

"Fly away Jack—fly a way, Jill; come again, Jack——"

"I had to go to Paddy Nowlan's for tobaccy, sir, for my father"—weeping, with his hand knowingly across his face—one eye laughing at his comrades.

"You lie—it wasn't."

"If you call me a liar agin, I'll give you a dig in the mug."

"It's not in your jacket."

"Isn't it?"

"Behave yourself—ha! there's the masther looking at you—ye'll get it now."

"None at all, Tim? And she's not after sinding an excuse wid you? What's that undher your arm?"

"My Gough, sir." (Buz, buz, buz.)

"Silence, boys. And you blackguard Liliputian, you, what kept you away till this?"

"One bird pickin', two men thrashin; one bird pickin', two men thrashin'; one bird pickin'——"

"Sir, they're stickin' pins in me here."

"Who is, Briney?"

"I don't know, sir; they're all at it."

"Boys, I'll go down to yees."

"I can't carry him, sir; he'd be too heavy for me. Let Larry Toole do it; he's stronger nor me—anyway,

there he's putting a corker pin in his mouth." (Buz, buz, buz.)

"Whoo-hoo-hoo-hoo! I'll never stay away agin, sir; indeed I won't, sir. Oh, sir, dear, pardon me this wan time; and if ever you cotch me doing the like agin, I'll give you lave to welt the sowl out of me." (Buz, buz, buz.)

"Behave yourself, Barny Byrne."

"I'm not touching you."

"Yes, you are; didn't you make me blot my copy?"

"Ho, by the livin', I'll pay you goin' home for this."

"Hand me the taws."

"Whoo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo—what'll I do, at all, at all! Oh, sir dear, sir dear, sir dear—hoo-hoo-hoo!"

"Did she send no message, good or bad, before I lay on?"

"Oh, not a word, sir, only that my father killed a pig yestherday, and he wants you to go up to-day at dinner-time." (Buz, buz, buz.)

"It's time to get lave"—"It isn't"—"It is"—"It isn't"—"It is," etc.

"You lie, I say; your faction never was able to fight ours. Didn't we lick all your dirty breed in Buillagh-battha fair?"

"Silence there."—(Buz, buz, buz.)

"Will you meet us on Sathurday, and we'll fight it out clane?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Tim, but you got a big fright, anyhow. Whist, *ma bouchal*, sure, I was only jokin' you; and sorry I'd be to bate your father's son, Tim. Come over and sit beside myself at the fire here. Get up, Micky Donoghue, you big burnt-shinned *spalpeen* you, and let the decent boy sit at the fire."

" Hullabaloo hoo-hoo-hoo—to go to give me such a welt only for sitting at the fire and me brought turf wid me."

" To-day, Tim ? "

" Yes, sir."

" At dinner-time, is id ? '

" Yes, sir."

" Faith, the dacent strain was always in the same family." (Buz, buz, buz.)

" Horns, horns, cock horns—oh, you up'd wid them, you lifted your fingers—that's a mark, now—hould your face till I blacken you."

" Do you call thim two sods, Jack Lanigan ?—why, 'tis only one long one broke in the middle ; but you must make it up to-morrow, Jack. How is your mother's tooth ?—did she get it pulled out yet ? "

" No, sir."

" Well, tell her to come to me, an' I'll write a charm for it that'll cure her.—What kept you till now, Paddy Magouran ? "

" Couldn't come any sooner, sir ? "

" You couldn't, sir ; and why, sir, couldn't you come any sooner, sir ? "

" See, sir, what Andy Nowlan done to my copy ? "—(Buz, buz, buz.)

" Silence ! I'll massacree yees if yees don't make less noise." (Buz, buz, buz.)

" I was down with Mrs. Kavanagh, sir."

" You were, Paddy—an' Paddy, *ma bouchal*, what wor you doing there ? "

" Masther, sir, spake to Jem Kenny here ; he made my nose bleed."

" Eh, Paddy ? "

"I was bringin' her a layin' hen, sir, that my mother promised her at Mass on Sunday last."

"Ah, Paddy, you're a game bird yourself, wid your layin' hens; you're as full o' mischief as an egg's full o' mate—(*omnes*, ha, ha, ha, ha!) Silence, boys—what are you laughin' at?—ha, ha, ha! Paddy, can you spell Nebachodnazure for me?"

"No, sir."

"No, nor a better scholar, Paddy, could not do that, *ma bouchal;* but I'll spell it for you. Silence, boys—whist, all of yees, till I spell Nebachodnazure for Paddy Magouran. Listen; and you yourself, Paddy, are one of the letthers—

> 'A turf and a clod spells Nebachod—
> A knife and a razure spells Nebachodnazure—
> Three pair of boots and five pair of shoes
> Spells Nebachodnazure, the King of the Jews.'

Now Paddy, that's spelling Nebachodnazure by the science of Ventilation; but you'll never go that deep, Paddy."

"I want to go out, if you plase, sir."

"Is that the way you ax me, you vagabone?"

"I want to go out, sir"—pulling down the forelock.

"Yes, that's something dacenter. By the sowl of Newton, that invinted fluxions, if ever you forget to make a bow again I'll flog the enthrils out of you. Wait till the pass comes in."

Then comes the spelling lesson.

"Come, boys, stand up to the spelling lesson."

"Micky, show me your book till I look at my word. I'm fifteenth."

"Wait till I see my own."

"Why do you crush for?"

" That's my place."

" No, it's not."

" Sir, spake to——I'll tell the masther.'

" What's the matther there ? "

" Sir, he won't let me into my place."

" I'm before you."

" No, you're not."

" I say I am."

" You lie, pug-face. Ha ! I called you pug-face ; tell now, if you dare."

" Well, boys, down with your pins in the book—who's king ? "

" I am, sir."

" Who's queen ? "

" Me, sir."

" Who's prince ? "

" I am prince, sir."

" Tagrag and bobtail, fall into your places."

" I've no pin, sir."

" Well, down with you to the tail—now, boys."*

Having gone through the spelling task, it was Mat's custom to give out six hard words, selected according to his judgment, as a final test ; but he did not always confine himself to that ; sometimes he would put a number of syllables arbitrarily together, forming a most heterogeneous combination of articulate sounds.

" Now, boys, here's a deep word, that'll thry yees—come, Larry, spell *me-mo-man-dran-san-ti-fi-can-du-ban-dan-ti-al-i-ty*, or *mis-an-thro-po-mor-phi-ta-ni-a-nus-mi-ca-li-a-tion*—that's too hard for you, is it ? Well, then,

* Each boy had to lay down a pin, and the one who answered best won most, and was king, the second was queen, and the third prince. The last was called " bobtail."

spell phthisic. Oh, that's physic you're spellin'. Now, Larry, do you know the difference between physic and phthisic ? "

" No, sir."

" Well, I'll expound it : phthisic, you see, manes—whist, boys ; will yees hould yer tongues there—phthisic, Larry, signifies—that is, phthisic—mind, it's not physic I'm expounding—phthisic—boys, will yees stop yer noise there—signifies—but, Larry, it's so deep a word in larnin' that I should draw it out on a slate for you. And now I remimber, man alive, you're not far enough on yet to undherstand it. But what's physic, Larry ? "

" Isn't that, sir, what my father tuck the day he got sick, sir ? "

" That's the very thing, Larry : it has what larned men call a medical property, and resembles little rickety Dan Reilly there—it retrogrades. Och ! och ! I'm the boy that knows things—you see now how I expounded them two hard words for yees, boys—don't yees ? "

" Yes, sir."

" So, Larry, you haven't the larnin' for that either ; but here's an 'asier one—spell me Ephabridotas (Epaphroditas)—you can't !—hut ! man, you're a big dunce entirely, that little *shoneen* Sharkey there below would sack. God be wid the day when I was the likes of you —it's I that was the bright *gorsoon* entirely ; and so sign was on it, when a great larned traveller—silence, boys, till I tell yees this—(a dead silence)—from Trinity College, all the way in Dublin, happened to meet me one day, seeing the slate and Gough, you see, undher my arm, he axes me, ' *Arrah*, Mat,' says he, ' what are you in ? ' says he. ' Faix, I'm in my waistcoat, for one thing,' says I, off-hand—silence, childher, and don't

laugh so loud—(ha, ha, ha !). So he looks closer at me : ' I see that,' says he ; ' but what are you reading ? ' ' Nothing at all, at all,' says I ; ' bad manners to the taste, as you may see, if you've your eyesight,' ' I think,' says he, ' you'll be apt to die in your waistcoat ' ; and set spurs to a fine saddle-mare he rid—faith, he did so—thought me so 'cute—(*omnes :* ha, ha, ha !). Whisht, boys, whisht ; isn't it a terrible thing that I can't tell yees a joke, but you split your sides laughing at it——ha, ha, ha !). Don't laugh so loud, Barney Casey " —(ha, ha, ha !).

Barney : " I want to go out, if you plase, sir."

" Go, *avick*—you'll be a good scholar yet, Barney Faith, Barney knows whin to laugh, anyhow."

" Well, Larry, you can't spell Ephabridotas ?—thin here's a short *weeshy* one, and whoever spells it will get the pins : spell a red rogue wid three letters. You, Micky ? Dan ? Jock ? Natty ? Alick ? Andy ? Pether ? Jim ? Tim ? Pat ? Rody ? you ? you ? you ? Now, boys, I'll hould ye my little Andy here, that's only beginning the " Rational Spelling Book," bates you all. Come here, Andy, *alanna.* Now, boys, if he bates you, you must all bring him a little *miscawn* of butter between two kale blades, in the mornin', for himself. Here, Andy, *avourneen,* spell red rogue wid three letthers."

Andy : " M-a-t—Mat."

" No, no, *avick,* that's myself, Andy ; it's red rogue, Andy—hem !—F——"

" F-o-x—fox."

" That's a man, Andy. Now, boys, mind what you owe Andy in the mornin', plase God, won't yees ? "

"Yes, sir." "Yes, sir." "Yes, sir." "I will, sir." "And I will, sir." "And so will I, sir," etc.

A hedge schoolmaster was the general scribe of the parish, to whom all who wanted letters or petitions written uniformly applied; and these were glorious opportunities for the pompous display of pedantry. The remuneration usually consisted of a bottle of whisky.

A poor woman, for instance, informs Mat that she wishes to have a letter written to her son, who is a soldier abroad.

"An' how long is he gone, ma'am?"

"Och, thin, masther, he's from me goin' an fifteen years; an' a comrade of his was spakin' to Jim Dwyer, an' says his ridgment's lyin' in the Island of Budanages,* somewhere in the back parts of Africa."

"An' is it a letther or petition you'd be afther havin' me to indite for you, ma'am?"

"Och, a letther, sir—a letther, masther; an' may the Lord grant you all kinds of luck, good, bad, an' indifferent, both to you an' yours; an' well it's known, by the same token, that it's yourself has the nice hand at the pen entirely, an' can indite a letther or pertition that the priest o' the parish mightn't be ashamed to own to it."

"Why, then, 'tis I that ud scorn to deteriorate upon the superiminence of my own execution at inditin' wid a pen in my hand; but would you feel a delectability in my superscriptionizin' the epistolary correspondency, ma'am, that I'm about to adopt?"

"Eagh? och, what am I sayin'!—sir—masther—sir?—the noise of the crathurs, you see, is got into my

* "Bud-an-ages" is an Irish oath.

ears; and, besides, I'm a bit bothered on both sides of my head ever since I had that weary weed."

"Silence, boys—bad manners to yees, will ye be aisy, you Lilliputian Bœotians—by my s——hem—upon my credit, if I go down to that corner, I'll castigate yees in dozens; I can't spake to this dacent woman, with your insuperable turbulentiality."

"Ah, *avourneen*, masther, but the larnin's a fine thing, anyhow; an' maybe 'tis yourself that hasn't the tongue in your head, an' can spake the tall, high-flown English; *a-wurrah*, but your tongue hangs well, anyhow—the Lord increase it!"

"Lanty Cassidy, are you gettin' on wid yer Stereometry? *festina, mi discipuli; vocabo Homerum, mox atque mox.* You see, ma'am, I must tache thim to spake an' effectuate a translation of the larned languages sometimes."

"*Arrah*, masther dear, how did you get it all into your head, at all, at all?"

"Silence, boys—*tace*—'*conticuere omnes intentique ora tenebant.*' Silence, I say agin."

"You could slip over, maybe, to Doran's, masther, do you see? You'd do it betther there, I'll engage: sure, an' you'd want a dhrop to steady your hand, anyhow."

"Now, boys, I am goin' to indite a small taste of literal correspondency over at the public-house here. You *literati* will hear the lessons for me, boys, till afther I'm back agin; but mind, boys, *absente domino, serepuunt servi*—meditate on the philosophy of that: and, Mick Mahon, take your slate and put down all the names; and, upon my sou—hem—credit, I'll castigate any boy

guilty of misty manners* on my retrogadation thither; *ergo momentote, cave ne titubes mandataque frangas.*"

"In throth, sir, I'd be long sarry to throuble you; but he's away fifteen years, and I wouldn't thrust it to another, and the corplar that commands the ridgment would regard your hand-write and your inditin'."

'Don't, ma'am, plade the smallest taste of apology."

"Eagh?"

"I'm happy that I can sarve you, ma'am."

"*Musha*, long life to you, masther, for that same, anyhow—but it's yourself that's deep in the larnin' and the langridges. The Lord increase yer knowledge—sure, an' we all want His blessin', you know."

* Misdemeanours.

FROM

DENIS O'SHAUGHNESSY GOING TO MAYNOOTH.

YOUNG Denis O'Shaughnessy was old Denis's son; and old Denis, like many great men before him, was the son of his father and mother in particular, and of a long line of respectable ancestors in general. He was, moreover, a great historian, a perplexing controversialist, deeply read in Dr. Gallagher and Pastorini, and equally profound in the history of Harry the Eighth, and Luther's partnership with the devil, at that particular period when they invented the Protestant Church between them, and gave the Popeship of it to Her Holiness Queen Elizabeth. Denis was a tall man, who, from his peculiar appearance, and the nature of his dress—a light drab-coloured frieze—was nicknamed the walking pigeon-house; and, truly, on seeing him at a distance, a man might naturally enough hit upon a worse comparison. He was quite straight, carried both arms hanging by his sides, motionless and at their full length, like the pendulums of a clock that has ceased going. In his head, neck, and chest there was no muscular action visible; he walked, in fact, as if a milk-pail were upon his crown, or as if a single nod of his head would put the

planets out of order. But the principal cause of the similarity lay in his roundness, which resembled that of a pump, running to a point, or the pigeon-house aforesaid, which is still better.

Denis, though a large man, was but a small farmer, for he rented only eighteen acres of good land. His family, however, like himself, was large, consisting of thirteen children, among whom Denis junior stood pre-eminent. Like old Denis, he was exceedingly long-winded in argument, pedantic as the schoolmaster who taught him, and capable of taking a very comprehensive grasp of any tangible subject.

Young Denis's display of controversial talents was so remarkably precocious that he controverted his father's statements upon all possible subjects with a freedom from embarrassment which promised well for that most distinguished trait in a controversialist—hardihood of countenance. This delighted old Denis to the finger-ends.

"Dinny, if he's spared," he would say, "will be a credit to us all yet. The sorra one of him but's as manly as anything, and as long-headed as a four-footed baste, so he is! Nothing daunts or dashes him, or puts him to an amplush ;* but he'll look you in the face so stout an' 'cute, an' never redden or stumble, whether he's right or wrong, but it does one's heart good to see him. Then he has such a lanin' to it, you see, that the crathur ud ground an argument on anythin', thin draw it out to a narration, an' make it as clear as rock-water, besides insensing you so well into the rason of the thing that Father Finnerty himself ud hardly do it betther from the althar."

* *i.e.*, a nonplus.

The highest object of an Irish peasant's ambition is to see his son a priest. Whenever a farmer happens to have a large family, he ususlly destines one of them for the Church, if his circumstances are at all such as can enable him to afford the boy a proper education. This youth becomes the centre in which all the affections of the family meet. He is cherished, humoured in all his caprices, indulged in his boyish predilections, and raised over the heads of his brothers, independently of all personal or relative merit in himself. The consequence is that he gradually becomes self-willed, proud, and arrogant, often to an offensive degree ; but all this is frequently mixed up with a lofty bombast, and an undercurrent of strong, disguised affection, that render his early life remarkably ludicrous and amusing. Indeed, the pranks of pedantry, the pretensions to knowledge, and the humour with which it is mostly displayed, render these scions of divinity, in their intercourse with the people until the period of preparatory education is completed, the most interesting and comical class, perhaps, to be found in the kingdom. Of these learned priestlings young Denis was undoubtedly a first-rate specimen. His father, a man of no education, was nevertheless as profound and unfathomable upon his favourite subjects as a philosopher ; but this profundity raised him mightily in the opinion of the people, who admired him the more the less they understood him.

Now, old Denis was determined that young Denis should tread in his own footsteps ; and, sooth to say, young Denis possessed as bright a talent for the dark and mysterious as the father himself. No sooner had the son commenced Latin, with the intention of adorning the Church, than the father put him in training for

controversy. For a considerable time the laurels were uniformly borne away by the veteran; but what will not learning do? Ere long the son got as far as syntax, about which time the father began to lose ground, in consequence of some ugly quotations which the son threw into his gizzard, and which, unfortunately, stuck there. By-and-bye the father receded more and more as the son advanced in his Latin and Greek, until, at length, their encounters were only resorted to for the purpose of showing off the son.

When young Denis had reached the age of sixteen or seventeen, he was looked upon by his father and his family, as well as by all their relations in general, as a prodigy. It was amusing to witness the delight with which the worthy man would call upon his son to exhibit his talents—a call to which the son instantly attended. This was usually done by commencing a mock controversy for the gratification of some neighbour to whom the father was anxious to prove the great talents of his son. When old Denis got the young *sogarth* fairly in motion, he gently drew himself out of the dispute, but continued a running comment upon the son's erudition, pointed out his good things, and occasionally resumed the posture of a controversialist, to reinspirit the boy if he appeared to flag.

"Dinny, *abouchal*, will you come up till Phadrick Murray hears you arguin' Scripther wid myself, Dinny. Now, Phadrick, listen, but keep your tongue sayin' nothin'; jist lave us to ourselves. Come up, Dinny, till you have a hate at arguin' wid myself."

"Father, I condimnate you at once—I condimnate you as being a most ungrammatical ould man, an' not fit to argue wid anyone that knows Murray's English Grammar,

an' more espaciously the three concords of Lilly's Latin one—that is, the cognation between the nominative case and the verb, the consanguinity between the substantive and the adjective, and the blood-relationship that irritates between the relative and the antecedent."

"I tould you, Phadrick! There's the boy that can rattle off the high English and the larned Latin, jist as if he was born wid an English Dictionary in one cheek, a Latin Necksuggawn* in the other, an' Doctor Gallagher's Irish Sarmons nately on the top of his tongue between the two."

"Father, but that unfortunately I am afflicted wid modesty, I'd blush *crocus* for your ignorance, as Virgil asserts in his Bucolics, *ut Virgilius ait in Bucolicis;* and as Horatius, a book that I'm well acquainted wid, says in another place, '*Huc pertinent verba*,' says he, '*commodandi, comparandi, dandi, promittendi, solvendi, imperandi, nuntiandi, fidendi, obsequendi, minandi, irascendi, et iis contraria.*'"

"That's a good boy, Dinny; but why would you blush for my ignorance, *avourneen?* Take care of yourself now, an' spake deep, for I'll out-argue you at the heel o' the hunt, 'cute as you are."

"Why do I blush for your ignorance, is it? Why, thin, I'm sure I have sound rasons for it: only think of the gross persivarance wid which you call that larned work, the Lexicon in Greek, a Necksuggawn. Father, never attimpt to argue or display your ignorance wid me again. But, moreover, I can probate you to be an ungrammatical man, from your own *modus* of argument."

"Go on, *avourneen*. Phadrick!"

* Lexicon.

"I'm listenin'. The sorra's no match for his 'cuteness, an' one's puzzled to think where he can get it all."

"Why, you don't know at all what I could do by larnin'. It would be no throuble to me to divide myself into two halves, an' argue the one agin the other."

"You would, in throth, Dinny."

"Ay, father, or cut myself acrass, an' dispute my head, maybe, agin my heels."

"Throth would you!"

"Or practise logic wid my right hand, and bate that agin wid my left."

"The sarra lie in it."

"Or read the Greek Tistament wid my right eye, an' thranslate it at the same time wid my left, according to the Greek an' English sides of my face, wid my tongue construin' into Irish, unknownst to both o' them."

"Why, Denis, he must have a head like a bell to be able to get into things."

"Throth an' he has that, an' 'ill make a noise in controversy yet, if he lives. Now, Dinny, let us have a hate at histhory."

"A hate at histhory?—wid all my heart. But before we begin, I tell you that I'll confound you precipitately; for you see, if you bate me in the English, I'll scarify you wid Latin, and give you a bang or two of Greek into the bargain. Och! I wish you'd hear the sackin' I gave Tom Reilly the other day—rubbed him down, as the masther says, wid a Greek towel; an' whenever I complimented him with the loan of a cut on the head, I always gave him a plaster of Latin to heal it; but the sorra worse healin' flesh in the world than Tom's is for the Latin, so I bruised a few Greek roots and laid them

to his *caput* so nate that you'd laugh to see him. Well, is it histhory we are to begin wid ? If it is, come on—advance. I'm ready for you—in protection—wid my guards up."

" Ha, ha, ha ! Well, if he isn't the drollest crathur, an' so 'cute ! But now for the histhory. Can you prove to me, upon a clear foundation, the differ atween black an' white, or prove that Phadrick Murray here—long life to him—is an ass ? Now, Phadrick, listen, for you must decide betune us."

" *Arrah*, have you no other larnin' than that to argue upon ? Sure, if you call upon me to decide, I must give it agin Dinny. Why, my judgment won't be worth a ha'porth if he makes an ass of me ! "

" What matther how you decide, man alive, if he proves you to be one ; sure, that's all we want. Never heed shakin' your head—listen an' it will be worth your while. Why, man, you'll know more nor you ever knew or suspected before when he proves you to be an ass."

" In the first place, father, you're ungrammatical in one word ; instead of sayin' ' prove,' always say probate or probe ; the word is descinded—that is, the ancisthor of it is *probo*, a deep Greek word—*probo probas*, *prob-oss*—that is to say, I'm to *probe* Phadrick here to be an *ass*. Now, do you see how pat I brought that in ? That's the way, Phadrick, I chastise my father with the languages."

" In throth it is ; go on, *avick*. Phadrick ! "

" I'm listenin'."

" Phadrick, do you know the differ atween black an' white ? "

" Atween black an' white ? Hut, *gorsoon*, to be sure I do "

"Well, an' what might it be, Phadrick, my larned Athiop? What might it be, I negotiate?"

"Why, thin, the differ atween them is this, Dinny, that black is—let me see—why—that black is not red—nor yallow—nor brown—nor green—nor purple—nor cutbeard—nor a heather colour—nor a grogram——"

"Nor a white?"

"Surely, Dinny, not a white, *abouchal;* don't think to come over me that way."

"But I want to know what colour it is, most larned sager."

"All rasonable, Dinny. Why, thin, black is—let me see—but, death alive!—it's—a—a—why, it's black, an' that's all I can say about it—yes, faix, I can—black is the colour of Father Curtis's coat."

"An' what colour is that, Phadrick?"

"Why, it's black, to be sure."

"Well, now, what colour is white, Phadrick?'

"Why, it's a snow colour—for all the world the colour of snow."

"White is?'

"Ay, is it."

"The dear help your head, Phadrick, if that's all you know about snow. In England, man, snow is an Oxford grey, an' in Scotland a pepper an' salt, an' sometimes a cutbeard, when they get a hard winther. I found that much in the Greek, anyway, Phadrick. Thry again, you imigrant; I'll give you another chance—what colour is white?"

"Why, thin, it's—white—an' nothin' else. The sorra one but you'd puzzle a saint wid your long-headed screwtations from books."

" So, Phadrick, your preamble is that white is white, and black is black."

" Asy, *avick*. I said, sure enough, that white is white ; but the black I deny—I said it was the colour of Father Curtis's black coat."

" Oh, you barbarian of the world, how I scorn your profundity an' emotions ! You're a disgrace to the human sex by your superciliousness of knowledge an your various quotations of ignorance. *Ignorantia*, Phadrick, is your date an' superscription. Now, stretch out your ears, till I probate or probe to you the differ atween black an' white."

" Phadrick ! ! " said the father.

" I'm listenin'."

" Now, Phadrick, here's the griddle, an' here's a clane plate—do you see them here beside one another ? "

" I'm lookin' at them.'

" Now shut your eyes."

" Is that your way, Denis, of judgin' colours ? "

" Shut your eyes, I say, till I give you ocular demonstration of the differ atween these two respectable colours."

" Well, they're shut."

" An' keep them so. Now, what differ do you *see* atween them ? "

" The sorra taste, man alive ; I never seen anything in my whole life so clearly of a colour as they are both this minute."

" Don't you see now, Phadrick, that there's not the smallest taste o' differ in them, an' that's accordin' to Euclid."

" Sure enough, Phadrick, that's the point settled.

There's no discrimination at all atween black an' white. They're both of the same colour—so long as you keep your eyes shut."

"But if a man happens to open his eyes, Dinny?"

"He has no right to open them, Phadrick, if he wants to prove the truth of a thing. I should have said probe—but it does not significate."

"The heavens mark you to grace, Dinny. You did that in brave style. Phadrick, *ahagur*, he'll make the darlin' of an arguer when he gets the robes an him."

"I don't deny that; he'll be aquil to the best o' thim. Still, Denis, I'd rather, whin I want to pronounce upon colours, that he'd let me keep my eyes open."

"Ay, but he did it out o' the books, man alive; and there's no goin' beyant thim. Sure, he could prove it out o' the Divinity, if you went to that. An' what is still more, he could, by shuttin' your eyes, in the same way prove black to be white, an' white black, jist as asy."

"Surely myself doesn't doubt it. I suppose by shutting my eyes the same lad could prove anything to me."

"But, Dinny, *avourneen*, you didn't prove Phadrick to be an ass yit. Will you do that by histhory, too, Dinny, or by the norrations of illocution?"

"Father, I'm surprised at your gross imperception. Why, man, if you were not a *rara avis* of somnolency, a man of most frolicsome determinations, you'd be able to see that I've proved Phadrick to be an ass already."

"Throth, I deny that you did; there wasn't a word about my bein' an ass in the last discoorse. It was all upon the differ atween black an' white."

"Oh, how I scorn your gravity, man! *Ignorantia*, as I

said, is your date an' superscription ; an' when you die you ought to go an' engage a stone-cutter to carve you a headstone, an' make him write on it, *Hic jacet Ignorantius Redivivus*. An' the translation of that is, accordin' to Publius Virgilius Maro—'Here lies a quadruped who didn't know the differ atween black an' white.' "

"But, Dinny, won't you give us the histhory of how the Protestant Church was invinted by the divil an' Luther, backed by Harry the Aighth while he was a Protestan' ? Give it to Phadrick, Dinny, till he hears it."

"Yes, my worthy *paterfamilias*, it shall be done ; but upon the hypothesis of your taciturnity. *Experientia docet*—which is, on bein' rendered into vernacularity, 'You are too much addicted to intherruption, an' throw the darkness of your intellect over the splendour of my narrations.' "

"But, afore you go on, Dinny, will you thranslate *doshet* for Phadrick ? "

"Father, I'll tolerate incongruity in no man. If you must become jocular, why, go an' larn Latin an' Greek to substantiate your jocularity. Become erudite for yourself, an' tell the story to your friends ; but I vow to Demosthenes, if you provoke me, I'll unsluice the flood-gates of my classicality, an' bear you off like a sthraw on the surface of my larned indignation."

"Well, I won't, Dinny—I won't, *avick*. I'll say nothin' barrin' listen. Phadrick, isn't that the larnin' ? "

"Bedad, it couldn't be bate."

"Well ! is it the history of the confab atween Luther an' the invintor o' the long-tailed heresy I'm to give you ? "

"But why was it long-tailed, Dinny? Tell that to Phadrick.

"Father, I tould you before that I'll not tolerate incongruity in any man who is ignorant of the classics. Was it not that Phadrick Murray's ignorance protects you, I'd take the liberty of lettin' you contemplate your own impenetrability to admonition. I call the Protestant heresy long-tailed for three reasons: first—*id est*—*primo*——"

"Phadrick!!!'

"I'm list'nin'!"

"*Primo*—Because it was not short. *Secundo*—Because the dragon that invinted it in the Revelations had a tail that reached over the third part of heaven. *Tertio*—Because the divil, who was joint-partner wid the dragon, never goes widout a switcher. So that it is from the purest of logic I call it the long-tailed heresy. Are you now satisfied?"

"Throth, we are, *avick*. Isn't that the larnin', Phadrick?"

"Bedad, he's as ould as Killileagh bog, all but one bank."

"Well! *Quid multis?* Luther was sittin' one evenin' in his *studium* or study, afther havin' secured a profound dinner; one foot was upon the hob, an' the other in the most convanient place, of coorse. One elbow was placed upon a round black table, near a decanther of wine an' a bottle of Innishowen whisky. I will not purtind to say which he was most in the habit of drinkin', lest I might glide into veracity. Ovid says, in his Metamorphoses, that tradition is in favour of the whisky. His words are—*Lutherus semper potavit merum Ennishonum*, which has puzzled the commentators very

much. St. Augustin, who was a good judge, thinks that 'merum Ennishonum' means the 'pure native,' which, he says, is jolly drink. Paul the Hermit an' St. Anthony, on the other hand, say that 'merum Ennishonum' is incorrect; for that had he stuck, as they did, to 'merum Ennishonum' he would never have left the Church. Others read 'clarum Ennishonum.' However, it does not significate. There he sat, as I have chalked him out for you, in a state of relaxation, frolicsome an' solitary, wid his countenance placid an' bloomin', his rosy, semi-demi-quaver dewlap dependin' from his chin, just ripe for meditation an' a tumbler.

"'Now Luther, you sinner,' says he, lookin' over at his own shadow upon the wall beyant—'Luther,' says he, 'here you sit, wid a good coat to your back, good shoes to your feet, good Connemara stockings to your legs, and excellent linen undher your penitential hair-cloth shirt. What more do you want, you knave, you?' says he, continuin' to hould a logical controversy wid himself. 'I say, you born desaver,' says he, 'what is it you would be at? Maybe it's a fat mithre you'd be smellin' afther? But I doubt,' says he, 'that an ecclesiastical union between your head an' a mithre was never intinded to be *in rerum natura*.'"

"Phadrick!!!"

"I'm list'nin'!"

"'What would you be at then?' said he, carryin' on the controversy. 'Haven't you enough o' the world? Haven't you ase an' indepindence, an' susceptibility, an' tergiversation, not to mintion that a fast dinner wid you would make a faste for a layman? Go off wid you,' says he to a fly that was leadin' a party of pleasure towards his nose—'go 'long wid you, you

sinner, an' don't be timptin' me! The fact or *factum* is, Luther,' says he——"

"Dinny, thranslate whackdem for Phadrick."

"Father, you're incorrigible. Why, *factum's* a fact, an' so is what I'm relatin'. 'The fact or *factum* is, Luther,' says he, 'that you are anxious to thranslate some honest man's daughter into an *uxor* for yourself—you are,' says he, 'you born sconce; an' you're puzzlin' your pineal gland how to effectuate the *vinculum matrimonii*.' He was thinkin', too, at the time, of a small taste of a vow—*votum* it is in the larned languages—that he had to dispose of at first cost, because the shabby intintion was in him. But no matther, it was all the same to honest Luther in the Greek.

"'Hould up your anterior countenance,' says he, 'an' look yourself straight in the face widout blushin', if you can.'"

"What's the manin' of antlerian countenance, Dinny?"

"It signifies, father, that part of the human *caput* upon which the faces of most single-faced gintlemen are to be found."

"An' where do thim that have two faces keep the second, Dinny?"

"Did you never hear of the *facies hypocritica* an' the *facies atra?* The *facies hypocritica* is worn over the *facies atra*, like a mask on a blackamoor. The former, father, is for the world in general, an' the latter for private use when the wearer happens to practise a thrifle in the reflectin' style. These belong to the double-faced gintlemen. There is a third, called the *facies candida*, which every fool an' knave can look through; but it's not worth washin'. I wouldn't give three sthraws for

the *facies candida* No, no ; commend me to the other two."

" Sure, they say, Dinny, two heads is betther than one ; an' so, of coorse, is two faces."

" Right, father. *Saltem recte dixisti.* I'll practise wid both myself, plase the fates."

" Throth, you will, *avick.*"

" ' Well,' the Reformer proceeded, ' Luther, how are we to manage ? Your health ! in the meantime,' says he, puttin' the dilution to his lips. ' Our best plan, at all evints, is to dhrink upon it. It's a hard subject, an' requires to be softened by the moisture, so as to make it tractable. The fact is,' he went on, ' that you're gettin' frolicsome on my hands—you are, you sinner ; and have a tendency to make some honest man's daughter flesh of your flesh, an' bone of your bone, by effectin' the *vinculum.* Isn't that the case, Luther ? '

" ' Faith, I bleeve so,' said he to himself ; ' but I'd give a thrifle to know in what manner I could accomplish the union. However, the fact cannot be denied that I'm runnin' fast into uxoriety, an' will marry, if the whole Christian world should become champions of abnegation. There's nothin' like a plural life,' says Luther. ' I'll not only live in my own person, but by proxy, as the bishops an' cardinals go to heaven.'

" In this manner was Luther debatin' the subject wid himself, assisted by the dilution, when a grave-looking man, in the garbage of a monk, walked in to him. He had all the appearance of a steady, sober, ecclesiastic ; his countenance was what they call a slate-colour—' *vultus slate-colorius*,' as Jugurtha says when giving an account of the transaction to Cornelius Agrippa the centurion.

" ' *Salve, Lutherum,* says the *peregrinus;* which is, ' Good-morrow, Luther."

" ' *Tu sis salvus quoque,*' says Luther back to him ; which is, ' Good-morrow, an' good luck.' "

" Phadrick ! ! "

" I'm list'nin'."

" ' Won't you take a sate, brother,' says Luther, ' an' be sated ? '

" ' Thank you kindly, brother,' replied the other. They called each other brothers, because the stranger was dressed, as I said, in the garbage of a monk, the vagrant. ' Thank you kindly,' says he ; ' an' if you'll allow me, I'll also take a tumbler of Innishowen,' says he ; ' bein' a little warm an' thirsty afther my walk.'

" ' You're as welcome as the flowers o' May,' says Luther, ' to the best in my house. Katty, get another tumbler an' more hot wather, an' place a chair over there on the opposite side o' the table. I'm sorry, brother,' says he, ' that I haven't somethin' betther to offer you ; but the thruth is, this bein' a fast day wid me, I had only a cut o' salmon, an' two or three other things, more in the shape of a collation than a dinner—not but that I came undher the exception, an' might have ate meat ; for, indeed, I wasn't to say too well to-day. However, I always think it right to obsarve the rules o' the Church, an' to practise macerosity an' timperance. Here's to our betther acquaintance ! '

" ' Thank you kindly, an' here's ditto,' says the other. ' I'm much of your way o' thinkin' myself,' says he, ' an' think it both clerical an' churchmanlike to mortify myself upon turbot, salmon, or any other miserable substitute for a dinner that smacks of penance ; though, indeed, like yourself, I wasn't to say well to-day, bein'

rather faverish, an' might have practised the exception, too.'

" ' In that case, then,' said Luther, ' I'll ordher down a couple of fat pullets an' a ham for supper. You know we're commanded to observe hospitality towards God's saints ; but in case you have a scruple about the exception, why, I'll absolve you, an' you'll absolve me, so that, after all, it won't signify. The thing's as long as it's short,' says Luther. ' *Shud orth !* ' says he, puttin' the dilution to his lips agin.

" ' Here's to your best wishes ! ' says the other. Yes, Luther,' says he, with a sigh of devotion, ' there's nothin' like humility an' carnation in a religious ministher. We have weighty duties to perform, an' we ought to see that the practice of self-denial is properly theorised in our own persons, an' its theory reduced to practicality by the hardened laity, who would ate and dhrink like ourselves, an' encroach upon our other privileges widout remorse, as if they had a right to them. They would ate like bastes, an' dhrink like fishes, Luther, if we allowed them,' says he. ' Here's to you ! '

" ' They would, the vulgarians,' says Luther. ' Katty, more hot wather ; an' Katty, *asthore*, put down two of the fattest of them crammed pullets, an' a ham, an' have them ready for supper, an' fetch another bottle of Innishowen ; afther which, Katty, we'll give you a dispensation for absence until supper-time. Well, but, my worthy,' says Luther, ' what's your opinion of clerical affairs in general ? Don't you think they're in a bad state ? '

" ' Not at all,' says the other. ' I think they're just as they ought to be.'

" ' I doubt that,' says Luther. ' The infarior clargy

laid undher great restrictions, in quensequence of their poverty. Look at the cardinals, an' bishops, an' rich abbots! Why, they've a monopoly of all that the world's good for.'

"'Thrue,' said the *peregrinus*."

"Phadrick!!!"

"I'm list'nin!"

"'Thrue,' says the *peregrinus*, 'an' my wish is to see that broken down.'

"'An' so is mine,' says Luther. 'They won't allow us infarior clargy to take wives to ourselves, though they're not ashamed to carry comforters about their necks in the open face of day. A poor clerical now can't afford to be licentious, for want o' money.'

"'Thrue; an' I would wish to see it made chape,' says the other, 'if it was only to vex the wealthy.'

"'You know as well as I do,' says Luther, 'that profligacy at present is at an extravagant price. The rich can afford to buy themselves dispensations for a month's or three months' licentiousness, or from a year's to seven years' indulgence, or seven hundred years', for that matther, if they lay down the cash; but wid us it's different—we can't afford to purchase the right to sin and threspass, yet we won't be allowed to marry. Now I'm determined to rescue the people an' the dhrudgin' clargy from this tyranny.'

"'Then you'd wish to see the clargy married, an' dispensations taken away?'

"'To be sure I would; an' an interesting sight it ud be, to see the rogues, every man wid a legal doxy undher his arm. I tell you, the *vinculum* must be effected.'

"'I have no objection to the *vinculum*,' replied the

advena, 'for it's all the same thing in the end. How do you think it could be brought about ?'

"Luther, who was meditatin' upon the subject at the time, didn't hear him.

"'I'll hould you a gallon of Roscrea to a gallon of Innishowen,' says the strange monk, 'that I could put you on a plan of havin' them married in scores—ay, in dhroves.'

"'If you do,' says Luther, 'I'll say you're a cleverer man than I am.'

"'Do you know much about England ?' says the sthranger.

"'A thrifle,' says Luther.

"'Well,' says the other, 'there's Harry the Aighth goin' to put away his wife, an' to take another in her place. Now's your time,' says he; 'strike while the iron's hot. He's at loggerheads wid the Pope an' the Church in gineral, an' will defend the right o' marrying to the last day of his life. Broach the subject now, Luther, an' he's the boy will support it.'

"'Give me your hand,' says Luther. 'Eh, St. Pether, but your palm's burnin'.'

"'Not at all,' says the other, 'I'm naturally hot; besides, as I said a while ago, I'm a thrifle faverish. Will you take my hint ?'

"'Would a cat take new milk ?' says Luther.

"'Well, then,' says the other, 'I'll give you some advice.'"

"But, Dinny," said the father, "wasn't all the two thieves said about the Church lies ?"

"Every word of it a lie—as gross as Luther himself. There was no such thing as tyranny or persecution, or

overgrown wealth in the Church then at all. No man ud be punished for not thinkin' or spakin' accordin' as the Church commanded. The clargy were as mild as lambs, an' didn't lord it over or trample upon the people good or bad. If a washerwoman was to summon a bishop for his quarther's washin', he'd attend like any other man, an' pay down the money if he had it, or if he hadn't he'd give it to her at half-a-crown a week; so that Luther, the dirty vagrant, had no grounds for makin' such a schism in the Church as he did."

"Phadrick, there's the knowledge!"

"Bedad, it bangs!"

"The *advena* thin instructed Luther at a great rate, tellin' him how he'd get on wid his heresy, an' many other things o' that nature. Luther, however, began to feel unasy where he sat. He first put one finger to his nosthril, after that his thumb to the other, lookin' arnestly at the monk all the time.

"'I beg your pardon,' says he, 'but maybe you'd take the other side o' the room; I think you'd find yourself more comfortable in it. There's a blast o' wind from your side,' says he, 'that's not pleasant, somehow.'

"'Oh, that ud be too much throuble,' says the other; 'I'm very well where I am.'

"'No throuble in life to me,' says Luther, 'but the conthrary. I find that I'm no sich theologian as you are; an' I think it but right that you should keep me at as respectful a distance as possible. I'll thank you to take the other side o' the room, I say; or, indeed, for that matther, if you sat on the outside for some time, it ud be as well. A thrifle o' fresh air ud sarve us both.'

"'Why, you're too delicate entirely,' said the stranger.

"'Don't stand on ceremony wid me,' says Luther;

' you may go out like a shot, an' I'll never say ill you did it. St. Pether, what's this at all ! '

" He then looked at the monk, an' saw a grim sneer upon his face ; his eyes, too, began to blaze, an' a circle o' fire played round his head. Another peep undher the table showed Luther the cloven foot, an' a long tail coiled round the chair. Luther, however, was a hardened sinner that there was no puttin' fear into ; so he instantly whipped up the poker that had been stickin' between the bars, an', of coorse, red hot ; an' the monk, seein' him about to commence the attack, took the liberty of rethratin' in double-quick time.

" ' Ha ! ' exclaimed Luther, ' there you go, you common vagabone ; but a sweet perfume do you lave behind you ! '

" Now, Phadrick, that's the way the Protestant Church was invinted by the divil an' Martin Luther. Harry the Aighth, an' his daughter Elizabeth, who was then Queen o' Scotland, both came in an' supported him afther wards."

" Well, by the livin', Dinny, I dunna where you get all this deep readin' ! "

" Sure, he gets it all in the Dixonary."

" Bedad, that Dixonary must be a fine book entirely, to thim that can undherstand it."

" But, Dinny, will you tell Phadrick the Case of Conscience atween Barny Branagan's two goats an' Parra Ghastha's mare ? "

" Father, if you were a grammarian I'd castigate your incompatibility as it desarves—I'd lay the scourge o' syntax upon you as no man ever got it since the invintion o' the nine parts o' speech. By what rule of logic can you say that aither Barny Branagan's goats or Parra

Ghastha's mare had a conscience? I tell you it wasn't they had the conscience, but the divine who decided the difficulty. Phadrick, lie down till I illusthrate."

"How is that, Dinny? I can hear you sittin'."

"Lie down, you reptile, or I shall decline the narration altogether."

"*Arrah*, lie down, Phadrick; sure he only wants to show you the rason o' the thing."

"Well, well, I'm down. Now, Dinny, don't let your feet be too larned, if you plase."

"Silence!—*taceto!* you reptile. Now, Phadrick, here, on this side o' you, lies Barny Branagan's field; an' there, on that side, lies a field of Parra Ghastha's: you're the ditch o' mud betuxt them."

'The ditch o' mud! Faix, that's dacent!"

"Now here, on Barny Branagan's side, feeds Parra Ghastha's mare; an' there, on Parra Ghastha's side, feed Barny Branagan's goats. Do you comprehend? Do you insinuate?"

"I do—I do. Death alive! there's no use in punchin' my sides wid your feet that way."

"Well, get up now an' set your ears."

"Now, listen to him, Phadrick!"

"It was one night in winter, when all nature shone in the nocturnal beauty of tenebrosity: the sun had set about three hours before; an', accordin' to the best logicians, there was a dearth of light. It's the general opinion of philosophers—that is, of the soundest o' them—that when the sun is down, the moon an' stars are usually up; and so they were on the night that I'm narratin' about. The moon was, wid great respect to her character, night-walkin' in the sky; and the stars vegetated in celestial genuflection around her. Nature,

Phadrick, was in great state. The earth was undher our feet, an' the sky above us. The frost, too, was hard, Phadrick, the air keen, an' the grass tendher. All things were enrobed wid verisimilitude an' scrupulosity. In this manner was the terraqueous part of our system, when Parra Ghastha's mare, after havin' taken a cowld collation on Barny Branagan's grass, was returnin' to her master's side o' the *merin;* an' Barny Branagan's goats, havin' tasted the sweets of Parra Ghastha's cabbages, were on their way acrass the said *merin* to their own side. Now, it so happened that they met exactly at a narrow gap in the ditch behind Rosha Halpin's house. The goats, bein' coupled together, got one on each side of the rift, wid the rope that coupled them extended acrass it. The mare stood in the middle of it, so that the goats were in the way of the mare, an' the mare in the way of the goats. In the meantime they surveyed one another wid great composure, but had neither of them the politeness to stir, until Rosha Halpin came suddenly out an' emptied a vessel of untransparent wather into the ditch. The mare, who must have been an animal endowed wid great sensibility of soul, stooped her head suddenly at the noise; an' the goats, who were equally sentimental, gave a start from nervishness. The mare, on raisin' her head, came in contact wid the cord that united the goats; and the goats, havin' lost their commandin' position, came in contact wid the neck o' the mare. *Quid multis?* They pulled an' she pulled, an' she pulled an' they pulled, until at length the mare was compelled to practise the virtue of resignation in the ditch wid the goats about her neck. She died by suspinsion; but the mettlesome ould crathur, wid a love of justice that did her honour, hanged the goats in

requital; for they departed this vale of tears on the mountain-side along wid her, so that they had the satisfaction of dyin' a social death together. Now, Phadrick, you quadruped, the case of conscience is, whether Parra Ghastha has a right to make restitution to Barny Branagan for the loss of his goats, or Barny Branagan to Parra Ghastha for the loss of his mare?"

"Bedad, that's a puzzler!"

"Isn't it, Phadrick? But wait till you hear how he'll clear it up! Do it for Phadrick, Dinny."

"Yis, Phadrick, I'll illusthrate your intellects by divinity. You see, Phadrick, you're to suppose me to be in the chair as confessor. Very well—or *valde*, in the larned languages—Parra Ghastha comes to confess to me, an' tells me that Barny Branagan wants to be paid for his goats. I tell him it's a disputed point, an' that the price o' the goats must go to the Church. On the other hand, Barny Branagan tells me that Parra Ghastha wishes to be paid for his mare. I say, again, it's a disputed point, an' that the price o' the mare must go to the Church—the amount of the proceeds to be applied in prayer towards the benefit of the parties in the first instance, an' of the faithful in general afterwards."

"Phadrick!!!"

"Oh, that I may never, but he bates the globe!"

Denny's character is a very common one in the remote parts of Ireland, where knowledge is novelty, and where the slightest tinge of learning is looked upon with such reverence and admiration as can be properly understood only by those who have an opportunity of witnessing it. Indeed, few circumstances prove the great moral influence which the Irish priesthood possess over the common people more forcibly than the extraordinary

respect paid by the latter to such as are designed for the "mission." The moment the determination is made, an incipient sanctity begins, as it were, to consecrate the young priest, and a high opinion of his learning and talents to be entertained, no matter how dull he may be so far as honest nature is concerned. Whatever he says is sure to have some hidden meaning in it, that would be highly edifying if they themselves understood it. But their own humility comes in here to prop up his talents; and whatsoever perplexity there may be in the sense of what he utters is immediately attributed to learning altogether beyond their depth.

Love of learning is a conspicuous principle in an Irish peasant; and in no instance is it seen to greater advantage than when the object of it appears in the "makins of a priest." Among all a peasant's good and evil qualities, this is not the least amiable. How his eye will dance in his head with pride when the young priest thunders out a line of Virgil or Homer, a sentence from Cicero, or a rule from syntax! And with what complacency and affection will the father and relations of such a person, when sitting during a winter evening about the hearth, demand from him a translation of what he repeats, or a grammatical analysis, in which he must show the dependencies and relations of word upon word—the concord, the verb, the mood, the gender, and the case; into every one and all of which the learned youth enters with an air of oracular importance, and a polysyllabicism of language that fails not in confounding them with astonishment and edification. Neither does Paddy confine himself to Latin or Greek, for his curiosity in hearing a little upon all known branches of human learning is boundless. When a lad is designed for the

priesthood, he is, as if by a species of intuition, supposed to know more or less of everything ; astronomy, fluxions, Hebrew, Arabic, and the black art are subjects upon which he is frequently expected to dilate ; and vanity scruples not, under the protection of their ignorance, to lead the erudite youth through what they believe to be the highest regions of imagination, or the profoundest depths of science and philosophy.

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THE END

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